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IB HISTORY

Route 2: Peacemaking, Peacekeeping International Relations 1918-36

Standard & Higher Level

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Advice on tackling Paper 1 (Route 2 – 20th Century World History)

What is Paper 1?

- Paper 1 is a source-based paper set on prescribed subjects drawn from the 20th century world history topics.
- Your school will enter you for one of the three Prescribed Subjects listed below.
- You must answer all four questions from the section; they are worth a total of 25 marks.
- The examination lasts one hour and makes up 20% of the assessment for Higher Level History and 30% of the assessment for Standard Level.

What are the Prescribed Subjects?

They are:

Prescribed subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping-international relations 1918-36
Prescribed Subject 2: The Arab-Israeli Conflict 1945-79
Prescribed Subject 3: Communism in Crisis 1976-89

Is there any information on particular topic areas within each prescribed subject that the IBO will set the source questions on?

Yes. The IBO have included in the History Syllabus a list of topic areas on which the source questions will be based. The questions set will not cover all of these areas in each year's examinations and, in many cases, will be largely based on just one of them. I have listed the topic areas on page 5 of this guide.

What types of source will be included on the examination paper?

- They will be either primary (sources produced at the time of an event) or a mixture of primary and secondary (sources produced after the event by someone who was not there at the time the event occurred).
- They may consist of written sources (e.g. letters, the text of a speech, extracts from books), visual sources (e.g. paintings, cartoons, photos), diagrams and statistical information.
- The number of sources set for each prescribed subject will be five.

What type of questions will be set?

- **Question 1** asks you to explain in your own words the message of one of the sources or selected parts of it, e.g. 'According to Source A, why did...?' Question 1 will be subdivided into a part (a) and a part (b). Question 1 is worth **5 marks**, and so, the paper will indicate that one part is worth 2 marks and the other 3.

- **Question 2** asks you to compare and contrast the views expressed by two sources, e.g. 'Compare and contrast the views expressed in Source A and Source C about the reasons why...' It is worth **6 marks**.

• **Question 3** asks you to assess the value and limitations of two sources with reference to the sources' origins and purpose, e.g. 'With reference to their origins and purpose assess the value and limitations of Sources B and D to an historian studying the Locarno Treaty.' It is worth **6 marks**.

• **Question 4** asks you to use your own knowledge and the sources to construct an argument in answer to a question about the prescribed subject, e.g. 'Using the sources and your own knowledge, analyse the results of the Ruhr Crisis.' It is worth **8 marks**.

Advice on answering questions

• Write in complete sentences.

• Use the mark allocation for each question to determine how long you spend on each question. In particular, give yourself enough time to do justice to Question 4 as it is worth 8 marks out of the total of 25. A rough guide might be to spend about 10 minutes on Question 1 (worth 5 marks), about 15 minutes on each of Questions 2 and 3 (worth 6 marks each) and about 20 minutes on Question 4.

• Remember to judge each individual source on its merits or weaknesses; avoid generalisations like 'Source A is a secondary source and so is unreliable because the author will not know exactly what happened'. Both primary and secondary sources can be reliable or unreliable. Also just because a source is biased does not mean it is of no use to an historian; e.g. a poster produced by German nationalists about the Versailles Treaty might not provide the historian with objective information about the terms of the treaty but it might tell us something very useful about the sort of image of the treaty that German nationalists wanted to project to the world.

• In answering the **comprehension** type of question (**Question 1**), you need to remember to use just the source, not your own knowledge. In this type of question the examiners are testing your understanding of the source. It is better if you keep direct quotations from the passage brief and avoid quoting back whole chunks of the passage at the examiner. If you need to make longer references to the text, paraphrase (put it in your own words). In general, the IBO mark scheme for Question 1 awards one mark for each valid point made; ensure that your explanation is clear and reasonably full (whilst not overrunning in terms of time).

• In **comparison** questions (**Question 2**), where you are asked to 'compare and contrast' two sources, don't forget to indicate both points of similarity and points of difference between the sources.

• In answering questions which ask you to **evaluate** the **limitations** and **usefulness** of particular sources (**Question 3**), keep focused on the sources' origins - who produced them, when were they produced etc - and purpose - why and for whom were they produced - and ensure that you identify both the sources' value and limitations, otherwise you will be unable to score more than just over half marks for your answer. So, what is meant by 'value' and 'limitations'? – 'value' means what the sources are useful for, linked to their origin and purpose; 'limitation' means what aspects of the issue referred to in the question the sources do **not** tell us about, and, the extent to which the sources may not be reliable or accurate, linked to their origin and purpose.

• In answering the type of question (**Question 4**) that asks you to use **your own knowledge and the sources** to analyse a particular area of the prescribed subject, the examiners will expect you to produce a short essay. I know that it is an obvious piece of advice, but do make sure that you use both the sources and your own knowledge, otherwise you will not be able to score more than just over half marks. In terms of approach, you will probably find it much more effective and time efficient to integrate the sources and your own knowledge, rather than running through what the sources have to contribute and then using your own knowledge. Equally, aim to take a thematic approach, using the sources and your own knowledge together, rather than going through each of the sources in turn.

How is this Revision Guide organised?

Prescribed subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping-international relations 1918-36

• I have provided a set of detailed notes organised primarily around the topic areas included in the IB syllabus, I have used these as headings.
• Following the notes, in each section I have provided one set of practice questions with some suggestions for answers and a second set of questions without answers for you to have a go at.

Acknowledgements

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Prescribed subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping-international relations 1918-36 syllabus details

Areas on which the source-based questions will focus are:

- aims of the participants and peacemakers: Wilson and the Fourteen Points
- terms of the Paris Peace Treaties 1919-20: Versailles, St Germain, Trianon, Neuilly, Sèvres / Lausanne 1923
- the geopolitical and economic impact of the treaties on Europe; the establishment and impact of the mandate system
- enforcement of the provisions of the treaties: US isolationism – the retreat from the Anglo-American Guarantee; disarmament – Washington, London, Geneva conferences
- the League of Nations: effects of the absence of major powers; the principle of collective responsibility and early attempts at peacekeeping (1920-25)
- The Ruhr Crisis (1923); Locarno and the 'Locarno Spring' (1925)
- Depression and threats to international peace and collective security: Manchuria (1931-3) and Abyssinia (1935-6)

Map of Europe showing territorial changes resulting from the Treaties of Versailles, St Germain, Neuilly and Trianon, and, the changes to Russia's borders

Prescribed subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping-international relations 1918-36

The Paris Peace Settlement of 1919-20

Background: The First World War

The peace conference convened in Paris in 1919 was an attempt to resolve the problems caused by the First World War, which had lasted from August 1914 to November 1918 and was unprecedented in the scale of the fighting and its death toll, with over 9 million soldiers killed. The First World War saw massive armies raised in France, Great Britain, Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, Italy (from 1915), and the USA (from 1917). Smaller contributions were made by a host of other countries, such as Belgium, Serbia, Bulgaria and Portugal. Although, the fighting was largely concentrated in Europe, the war acquired a global dimension with the participation of the USA, British Dominions (South Africa, Canada, Australia and New Zealand), China and Japan. The war was the first large-scale war fought in an industrialised age, hence the mass armies and mass slaughter; it was in the famous phrase of Eric von Ludendorff, the German general, the first *'total war'*: the civilian population of the belligerent countries was mobilised in order to maximise weapons production and supplies for the armed forces. So, the socio-economic effects of the First World War on the countries involved were also without precedent. These factors helped shape the Paris peace settlement because they explain the public desire for revenge so evident in countries like Britain and France, as well as creating a powerful sentiment for a lasting peace; Woodrow Wilson, the US President, had referred to the First World War as *'the war to end all wars.'*

A key outcome of the First World War was to be the collapse of four great empires: the German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian and Ottoman empires, which had dominated central and eastern Europe throughout the previous century. When the peacemakers gathered in Paris in 1919, one of the most difficult tasks was the redrawing of the map of Central and Eastern Europe as an array of independent states had sprung up in that region in the last days of the First World War.

The causes of the First World War

The causes of the First World War are complex and have excited a passionate debate among politicians and historians down the years and it is not the place to go into them here, except extremely briefly. Suffice it to say, that an elaborate alliance system dating from the 1870s had divided Europe's great powers into two armed camps, which in turn engendered an arms race that built up tensions. The decline of the Ottoman Empire in South-East Europe created a power vacuum in the Balkans, which encouraged Slav, and particularly Serb, nationalism. This appeared to pose a growing threat to the multi-national Austro-Hungarian Empire, which competed with Russia for influence in the Balkans. Imperial rivalries also played their part and what brought Great Britain out of its traditional isolationism more than anything else, was the aggressive foreign policy pursued by Kaiser Wilhelm II (1888-1918). Wilhelm sought to challenge both Britain's naval supremacy and its imperial predominance as Germany looked to acquire colonies.

The course of the First World War

When Germany declared war on Russia and France in 1914, its government had anticipated a short victorious war, defeating France and Russia by means of the Schlieffen Plan. However, the Schlieffen Plan failed to deliver a quick victory and Germany, and its ally, Austria-Hungary, became locked into a long and costly war of attrition against the Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia). In 1917 Germany decided to launch a campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare in an attempt to starve Britain into surrender. However, Britain hung on and the gamble backfired as it provoked the USA into declaring war on Germany.

Germany's hopes of victory were not totally extinguished as by the end of 1917 Russia was on the point of dropping out of the war following a series of defeats and two revolutions, the second of which brought Lenin's Bolsheviks to power. In the spring of 1918 the Germans launched a massive offensive against the French, British and Americans. After initially breaking through the Allies' lines and pushing them back towards Paris, the German attacks lost momentum and from August it was the turn of the Allies to mount a succession of powerful counter-attacks which drove the Germans back.

Germany looks to make peace

It is important to understand that until the late summer of 1918 and the so-called Hundred Days offensive, beginning in August, the Allies did not appreciate how weak the position of the Central Powers was and therefore how soon they would be confronted by the challenges of making peace. By September 1918, the German military leaders, Hindenburg and Ludendorff, accepted that Germany could no longer avoid defeat and urged the Kaiser to seek peace terms from the Allies. At the end of September, Bulgaria became the first of Germany's allies to sign a ceasefire, dropping out of the war. In October the Kaiser reluctantly agreed to begin ceasefire talks with the USA and on 3rd October the German government approached the USA to negotiate an armistice based on the Fourteen Points. Wilson delayed discussions with his allies about armistice terms until 23rd October. Late October through to early November saw protracted arguments between the Allies about the armistice terms; eventually they agreed that the Fourteen Points would constitute the basis of an armistice agreement but that the contentious issue of freedom of the seas would require further discussion at the forthcoming peace conference and that reparations, not explicitly mentioned in the Fourteen Points, would also be on the agenda for discussion by the Allies.

Before an armistice was signed with Germany, its other allies dropped out of the war; the Ottoman Empire agreed to a ceasefire on 30th October; Austria-Hungary concluded an armistice on 3rd November.

The collapse of the Romanov monarchy and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918

In February 1917, Tsarist Russia collapsed and a second revolution saw Lenin seize power eight months later. The new Soviet government decided to seek peace terms from Germany and, under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, had to give up Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Poland, the Ukraine and Georgia. Germany imposed much tougher conditions on Russia than she was to suffer a year later at Versailles.

Following Germany's defeat, most of these areas became independent countries, with the exception of Georgia and the Ukraine, which were forced into the new USSR. These territorial changes were to prove a major factor in shaping the Paris peace settlement's redrawing of boundaries in Eastern Europe in 1919-20.

The collapse of the Hohenzollern and Habsburg monarchies

In the dying days of the First World War, both the Hohenzollern (German) and Habsburg (Austro-Hungarian) empires collapsed.

By November, the Austro-Hungarian Empire had already begun to break up as several of its non-German nationalities seized the opportunity to set up independent states:

- 17 October - a South Slav state was declared (later to become known as Yugoslavia)
- 30 October - the establishment of Czechoslovakia was announced formally
- 6 November - an independent Poland was proclaimed

Therefore, when the leaders of the victorious countries met at Paris in 1919, they were presented to a large extent with a fait accompli in central and eastern Europe

Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated on 9th November, whilst the Emperor Karl of Austria-Hungary followed suit three days later. In the case of Germany, Wilhelm II seems to have hoped that his appointment in October of a German cabinet drawn from leading figures in the Reichstag (Parliament), with the liberal Prince Max of Baden as Chancellor, would enable him to preserve the monarchy in Germany and that it might incline the Allies to treat Germany more generously in the post-war peace negotiations. However, the Kaiser's government quickly began to lose control over the country as a wave of riots, strikes and mutinies broke out. Germany's soldiers, sailors and civilians were angry to find out that Germany was on the verge of defeat after four years of hardship, extreme shortages and two million soldiers killed.

For a time it looked as if Germany might follow Russia's recent example and undergo a violent revolution. In an attempt to contain the upheavals, Hindenburg and Prince Max told the Kaiser that he had to abdicate. On November 9th 1918, the Kaiser fled to Holland and Germany was declared a republic. Two days later, the new socialist government, led by Friedrich Ebert, signed a ceasefire with the Allies, ending the war.

Attempted Communist Revolution in Germany: January 1919

The Armistice came into effect on 11th November. In December, in Germany, the Spartacist League broke away from the Independent Socialists and formed the KPD (German Communist Party). Some KPD leaders wanted to carry out a Bolshevik style revolution. In January 1919, the Spartacists staged a rising in Berlin; this was bloodily put down by the freikorps (bands of extreme right-wing ex-servicemen).

Fear of *Bolshevism*

Russia was to have no say in the Paris Peace Conference and did not join the League of Nations set up in 1920. During the Russian Civil War (1918-21), the Bolsheviks' opponents, known as the Whites, received help from the USA, Britain,

France and Japan. However, this help was half-hearted and was withdrawn by the end of 1920.

Q. Why did the Allies intervene in the Russian Civil War?

- Initially, the interventionist powers were attempting to help install a new Russian government that would rejoin the allied war effort against Germany, because the Bolsheviks had withdrawn Russia from the war in March 1918.

- They were worried about the possibility of communist revolution spreading from Bolshevik Russia or of communist revolutions breaking out in other parts of war-ravaged Europe; this fear was an important consideration in shaping the decisions made at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

The Aims of the participants and peacemakers

All of the leaders of the major states gathered together in Paris in 1919 were subject to intense pressure from public opinion. This was a novel feature in that in previous peace settlements, such as the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15, which followed the Napoleonic Wars, statesman had been largely insulated from public opinion because representative government and a free press had not existed in most countries. In 1919, all of the 'Big Four' (the USA, Britain, France and Italy) had a democratic system of government and had a lively and uncensored press, which, particularly in France and Britain, demanded revenge, reparations and security. The power of the press was an important factor in shaping the settlement. Headlines in the British press, such as '*Hang the Kaiser!*' and '*Squeeze Germany until the pips squeak!*' were typical at this time.

Wartime Agreements

Another complicating factor was the fact that during the war the Allies had made a number of promises concerning the post-war settlement, some of them in secret treaties such as the Treaty of London (1915), which had brought Italy into the war.

The Treaty of London (1915)
Under the Treaty of London, Britain and France had agreed that at the end of the war certain territories including significant numbers of non-Italian speakers, such as German-speaking South Tyrol, should be handed over to Italy. With reference to Italy's proposed gains, David Lloyd George, the British Prime Minister, remarked apologetically that '*war plays havoc with the refinements of conscience.*'

Storing up great trouble for the future, the British and French had made conflicting promises with regards to the Ottoman Empire's territories in the Middle East:

The McMahon Declaration (1915)
In the McMahon Declaration (1915), the British High Commissioner in Cairo, Sir Henry McMahon, corresponded with Hussein Ibn Ali, Sheriff of Mecca, promising British support for Arab independence, if the Arabs rose up against Turkish rule.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916)
In 1916, Britain and France reached an understanding about the Middle East, known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement; essentially they defined their respective spheres of influence following the end of the war, e.g. Britain was to be the dominant power in Mesopotamia, while Syria would come under French influence; Palestine would come under an international administration.

The Balfour Declaration (1917)
In 1917, Arthur Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, wrote to the British Zionist Federation, declaring that the British government supported the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.

The Aims of the *'Big Four'* (The USA, Britain, France and Italy)

France

French politicians and military commanders were keen to ensure French security by weakening Germany militarily, territorially and financially. They wanted to prevent any repetition of Germany's invasion of France in both 1870 and 1914.

Georges Clemenceau demanded:

- ⇒ The return of Alsace-Lorraine (taken by Germany from France in 1871)
- ⇒ The Rhineland to be taken from Germany and set up as an independent state
- ⇒ Extensive demilitarisation of Germany
- ⇒ Reparations to provide compensation for the damage done to France during the war and to pay for war pensions to French war veterans and war widows.

In addition, Clemenceau was intent on achieving an Anglo-American military guarantee against future German aggression.

Britain

David Lloyd George outlined Britain's war aims in a speech to the Trade Union Congress in January 1918:

- ⇒ Germany to return all territory it had occupied during the war
- ⇒ An independent Polish state should be created
- ⇒ Self-government for the nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and for the non-Turkish peoples within the Ottoman Empire.

During the General Election of December 1918, British politicians had also promised 'to make Germany pay'. Although Lloyd George recognised that British interests would be best served by German economic recovery, since Germany had been a vital purchaser of British goods prior to 1914, inconsistently, Lloyd George pressed for a very high level of reparation payments by Germany.

The USA

Woodrow Wilson outlined his aims for a peace settlement in a speech to Congress in January 1918. Wilson's *Fourteen Points* were idealistic and based on his assessment of the reasons why war had broken out. Even before US entry into the war, Wilson had declared that the purpose of the war should be *'to make the world safe for democracy.'*

Wilson stressed the importance of determining the territorial settlement of Europe on the basis of national self-determination (nationalities should have the right to choose the government they lived under). He urged general disarmament, freedom of navigation, free trade and an end to secret treaties. Above all, Wilson saw the need to create a League of Nations in order to secure world peace.

Wilson's Fourteen Points

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at...
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the sea... in peace and war...
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions...
4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
5. A free, open minded, absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims... the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world...
7. Belgium...must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty, which she enjoys in common with all other free nations...
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine...should be righted.
9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.
10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary...should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.
11. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territory restored: Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; ...
12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities, which are now under Turkish rule, should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened... under international guarantee.
13. An independent Polish state should be erected... which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea...
14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

Britain and France's attitude to the Fourteen Points

Britain and France were uncertain and unhappy about Wilson's Fourteen Points. Clemenceau was sceptical about the effectiveness of a League of Nations and saw the Fourteen Points as too idealistic; he found Wilson's moralising attitude irritating, complaining that even God only had 10 commandments, whereas Wilson had 14! British politicians were very hostile to Point 2, laying down that there should be freedom of the seas. This ran contrary to Britain's desire to have a free hand in deploying its naval power as it had done in the First World War, blockading Germany's ports. However, Lloyd George and Clemenceau accepted the Fourteen Points for fear of the USA making a separate peace with Germany, which Wilson threatened in October 1918.

One very important factor, which weakened Wilson's position during the Paris Peace Conference, was the outcome of the mid-term US elections in November 1918; in these, Wilson's Republican opponents had won a majority in both houses of Congress. The Republicans were very sceptical about Wilson's Fourteen Points and US membership of an international peacekeeping organisation.

Italy

Italy, in agreeing to enter the First World War as an ally of Britain and France, had signed the Treaty of London in 1915, by which she had been promised part of the Ottoman Empire and a share of Germany's colonies; the Dodecanese Islands; Trentino, the South Tyrol, Istria and part of Dalmatia (which would have ignored national self-determination, which Woodrow Wilson regarded as the guiding principle for drawing up the borders of the new map of Europe) from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Terms of the Paris Peace Treaties 1919-20

The representatives of 32 countries met in Paris in 1919 to draw up the post-war settlement; however, of these, four countries' leaders dominated the decision-making: the USA, Britain, France – the *'Big Three'* – and, to a much lesser extent, Italy. Most of the discussions took place in Paris itself, with just the formal signing ceremony of the treaty with Germany being held at the Palace of Versailles.

58 commissions and committees were set up to work on the details of the settlement, but the key decisions were taken initially in the Council of Ten, on which the leaders and foreign ministers of the USA, Britain, France, Italy and Japan sat, and, from March, by the Council of Four, comprising the leaders of the USA, Britain, France and Italy. Japan showed little interest in the European aspects of the peace settlement and just joined the Council of Four for issues that were of concern to them.

Disagreements

The discussions were often heated and led to a temporary walk out by Italy and a threatened walk out by Japan. Orlando, the Italian Prime Minister left the conference for nearly took weeks in April-May because the USA and Britain rejected his demand that Fiume be handed over to Italy. Instead it was decided that Fiume should become a free city.

The Japanese delegation were angered by the European powers' refusal to include a clause on racial equality in the League of Nations' Covenant and by Woodrow Wilson's initial objections to Japan taking control of Germany's concession (trading and other privileges) in China in Shandong (Shantung). Eventually, Wilson gave ground and conceded Japan's demand with the proviso that Japan would at some stage in the future restore Shandong to Chinese sovereignty. The decision to transfer Shandong to Japan sparked widespread demonstrations in China, known as the May Fourth Movement, and the Chinese government refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles.

Q. How did the Big Three disagree over Germany's treatment?

The most contentious set of issues of all concerned the treatment of Germany. In the section above on the aims of the 'Big Four', I have explained the differing approaches of the leading statesman to Germany. Ultimately, the decisions taken regarding Germany's treatment represented a compromise between, on the one hand, Woodrow Wilson's emphasis on the need to balance just punishment of Germany's aggression with redemption and a desire to see a stable Germany emerge that would play its part in a peaceful and ordered Europe, and, on the other hand, Georges Clemenceau's determination to see Germany permanently weakened. Although Lloyd George certainly pressed for a tough line on particular issues, such as reparations, he did push successfully for the moderation of several aspects of Germany's treatment. Of particular importance, was Lloyd George's insistence that plebiscites should be held in Upper Silesia and Marienwerder and Allenstein, which the other statesmen accepted.

In spite of popular perceptions that Wilson rigidly stuck to an unrealistically idealistic approach to peacemaking based on his Fourteen Points, it is clear that he saw the need to temper his commitment to a principled settlement with strategic and economic considerations. The decision reached about the Polish Corridor illustrates this well; Wilson recognised that Poland needed access to the Baltic and so agreed that West Prussia and Posen should be awarded to Poland and that the port of Danzig should become a free city, under League of Nations' control, which Poland could use. In accepting this, Wilson knew this would involve handing over about 2 million German-speakers to Poland, thus contravening his principle of national self-determination.

The Anglo-American Guarantee for France

One reason why Clemenceau was prepared to moderate France's demands, for example why he accepted that the Rhineland would remain part of Germany, was that Wilson and Lloyd George agreed to a written guarantee of military support in the event of a future German attack on France. Wilson and Lloyd George signed an agreement to that effect on the same day that Germany signed the Treaty of Versailles. However, this promise of military protection was never ratified by the USA and consequently Britain did not either (the original guarantee had stipulated the need for mutual confirmation for it to come into effect). France, therefore, was left without the security guarantee its politicians so desperately had wanted.

The proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference were formally wound up in January 1920, although, once the treaty with Germany was concluded in June 1919, the leaders of the main countries departed from Paris, leaving the remaining work to be overseen by the Council of the Heads of Delegations. It was not until June and August 1920 that the final treaties, with Hungary and Turkey respectively, were signed.

The Treaty of Versailles: with Germany (June 1919)

The Conference produced separate treaties for all the defeated Powers, and the Treaty with Germany was called the Treaty of Versailles because it was signed in the *Hall of Mirrors* in Louis XIV's Palace of Versailles. The terms, comprising 440 clauses, were finalised by late April and, on 7 May, were given to German representatives at Versailles. The German representatives were initially allowed 15 days to respond, eventually extended by another week.

The very lengthy and scathing German response was handed to the Allied powers at the end of the month. This led to last minute arguments among the Allies about whether the terms should be moderated in Germany's favour, with the British leading the way, for example, in advocating a shorter Allied occupation period of the Rhineland and Germany's admission to the League of Nations. One modification that Britain did persuade the Allies to accept, was the holding of a plebiscite in Upper Silesia but otherwise the original terms stood more or less intact.

The *Diktat*

Now with the terms confirmed, the German delegation was allowed no further say in the drawing up of the Treaty, and had no choice but to sign it, which they eventually did on 28th June 1919. This led Germans to attack the treaty as unfair on the grounds that it was a *diktat*, the *'dictated peace'*. The location and manner in which the signing ceremony was staged were designed to humiliate Germany, since the proclamation of the German Empire had occurred in the very same place back in January 1871. Many contemporaries recorded how the German representatives at the signing of the treaty were brought before the Allies like prisoners in the dock.

The Terms

Territory lost:

1	Alsace-Lorraine to France
2	West Prussia and Posen to Poland
3	North Schleswig to Denmark
4	Eupen and Malmedy to Belgium
5	Danzig was designated an international city, with Poland given the right to use its port facilities
6	The Saar was placed under League of Nations control for 15 years; the French were to control its coalmines for 15 years; a plebiscite was to be held in 15 years time to decide its final sovereignty
7	Upper Silesia – at first, the Allies decided that it should go to Poland but Lloyd George insisted on a plebiscite, which went 14:9 to the Germans. Consequently, Upper Silesia was partitioned with the Poles receiving half the area and two-thirds of the mines. Germans saw this as unfair.

Germany lost all her colonies in Africa, China and the Pacific. These colonies were handed over to the victor powers as mandates. German South West Africa (Namibia) came under the control of South Africa. Britain got German East Africa (Tanganyika), and Britain and France divided Togoland and the Cameroons between them. Belgium got Rwanda.

Germany lost about 13% of her European territory. In some cases this meant that she handed back territory she had seized from other countries in the 19th century, such as Alsace-Lorraine, but many of the 8.5 million people who were suddenly, as

a result of the Versailles Treaty, no longer citizens of Germany were German-speakers. This was much more the case in the lands Germany lost in the east and it was this aspect of the territorial settlement that many Germans regarded as most unfair. This was a breach of the principle of national self-determination, in which President Wilson strongly believed.

In a few areas, plebiscites (referenda) were held in order to decide whether they should stay part of Germany or not. Consequently, Schleswig was divided between Denmark and Germany; the population of Marienwerder and Allenstein (adjoining East Prussia) voted to stay with Germany and did so; and the League of Nations' Council decided on the partition of Upper Silesia, following a plebiscite in the region.

East Prussia separated from the rest of Germany

The transfer of West Prussia to Poland and the loss of Danzig by Germany (now under League of Nations' administration) meant that East Prussia, which remained part of Germany, was now cut off from the main part of Germany. This greatly angered the Germans, particularly as so many German-speakers lived in the 'Polish Corridor' that gave Poland access to the Baltic Sea.

The eventual territorial settlement represented a compromise between the leaders of the 'Big Four', since Wilson conceded that some German-speaking areas would need to be ceded to Poland in order to give it viable borders and access to the sea, whilst Clemenceau abandoned his demands that the Rhineland and Saarland be separated permanently from Germany. The Rhineland was to remain part of Germany but no German troops were permitted in the region and an allied occupation force was to be stationed there for 15 years (in fact, it was withdrawn in 1930). The Saarland was transferred to League of Nations' control for 15 years, after which a plebiscite would determine its future status.

The loss of territory also meant a loss of raw materials and factories. In all Germany lost 10% of her industrial capacity but some industries, such as iron ore (48% of capacity lost) were especially hard hit.

Furthermore, the Treaty of Versailles forbade forever the unification of Germany with Austria – a dream that many Germans in both countries had long held. This clearly ran contrary to the principle of national self-determination.

War Guilt and Reparations

Germany was also forced to admit her guilt for starting the war (Article 231 of the Treaty). This was widely perceived in Germany as inaccurate and unfair, because it was believed that many countries shared responsibility for the outbreak of the war, particularly Russia which had mobilised its forces before Germany had done. Stemming from the notion of German 'war guilt', the Treaty of Versailles laid down that Kaiser Wilhelm II and a number of senior German officials should stand trial for *'a supreme offence against international morality and the sanctity of treaties'*. In fact, very little was done in practice to implement these provisions because Wilhelm had fled to Holland and the Dutch government refused to extradite the former Kaiser. Only a dozen lesser German commanders were brought to trial and, of these, a German court only found six guilty and they were given just fines or short prison sentences.

'War guilt' involved accepting responsibility for the damage Germany had done to the countries she had attacked:

> The Allied and associated governments declare, and Germany accepts the responsibility for, all the loss and damage suffered by the Allied and associated governments as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.

The French, whose territory in the North-East had suffered serious damage during four years of German occupation, were especially keen to make Germany pay, not least because France, like Britain, had borrowed considerable sums from the USA and the USA was insisting on repayment. Reparations proved to be one of the most contentious issues at the Paris Conference. The article relating to reparations represented a compromise between the Allied leaders in order to limit Germany's liability but satisfy Britain, France and Belgium's basic demands. At Lloyd George's insistence, the principle was accepted that reparations should cover not just the physical destruction caused by the fighting but also the cost to the Allied governments of providing for pensions to war veterans and widows. However, no figure was fixed at Versailles. A precise figure had to await further international discussion and was only agreed in 1921.

Q. What decisions were reached on reparations in 1921?

⇒ Germany to pay the sum of £6,600 million (132 billion gold marks)

⇒ These reparations were to be paid in regular instalments; some would be paid in gold and some in goods, including coal, pig iron and telegraph poles

⇒ Germany's debts were divided into three categories (A, B and C) and two-thirds of the £6,600 million (132 billion gold marks) fell under category C and no fixed time-scale was laid down for the payment of that portion.

The practice of imposing reparations or an indemnity on a defeated country had many precedents, e.g. France had been obliged to pay Germany £200 million in 1871. Given the cost of the war to France and Britain (and Belgium), it is understandable that those governments sought financial compensation from the defeated powers. It is significant in this respect that Germany had imposed a huge indemnity on Russia in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (March 1918). For the French, reparations were not just a question of compensation but were also seen as a way of weakening Germany.

Reparations proved very unsatisfactory, in that they bred lasting German resentment and helped destabilise Germany's economy and therefore held back European recovery in the early 1920s. Furthermore, the issue of reparations was the source of ongoing disagreement between France and Britain, particularly over France's occupation of the Ruhr in 1923.

Military restrictions on Germany

1. The German Army was limited to 100,000 volunteers enlisted for a 12-year period of service, conscription was forbidden in order to prevent the creation of a reserve.
2. Germany's General Staff was abolished.
3. Germany was not allowed an air force, only 6 battleships, no submarines, tanks or heavy artillery.

The Treaty of St Germain: with Austria (September 1919)

The former Austro-Hungarian Empire had already split up and the Treaty of St Germain recognised the changes, which had taken place since the autumn of 1918. However, the new Austrian government's claim to be treated as a new state, rather than as a successor to the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, was denied. This meant that Austria was subject to the same range of punishments meted out to Germany: Austria had to accept war guilt, pay reparations and limit its armed forces to just 30,000 men.

A bitter row broke out among the wartime Allies about which territories should be awarded to Italy from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. Italy did, in fact, receive most, if not all, of what it had been promised by the Treaty of London (1915), including the South Tyrol. However, Orlando, the Italian Prime Minister, stormed out of the Paris Peace Conference and stayed away for two weeks, furious that the USA, Britain and France refused to hand over Fiume and part of Dalmatia to Italy. Orlando's protest had no effect and Fiume was declared a free city while Dalmatia was awarded to the new state of Yugoslavia.

1 Bohemia and Moravia went to Czechoslovakia
2 Dalmatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina went to Yugoslavia
3 Istria, the Trentino and South Tyrol went to Italy
4 Galicia went to Poland
5 Bukovina went to Romania

Austria's population was reduced from 22 million to 6.5 million. Vienna was now disproportionately big and Austria had lost most of its former industrial areas. One-third of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire's German-speaking population now belonged to the new successor states other than Austria.

The Treaty of Neuilly: with **Bulgaria (November 1919)**

Bulgaria also had to pay reparations and its armed forces were limited to 20,000 men. In handing over Western Thrace to Greece, Bulgaria lost its Aegean coastline.

1 Northern Macedonia went to Yugoslavia
2 Western Thrace went to Greece
3 Dobrudja went to Romania

The Treaty of Trianon: with Hungary (June 1920)

The settlement with Hungary was delayed until 1920 because of considerable unrest within Hungary and fighting between Hungary and Romania in 1919 in the course of which Romanian troops temporarily occupied Budapest. In 1919, there was a Communist takeover in Hungary, led by Bela Kun, that lasted until August. Elections in January 1920 led to the appointment of Admiral Horthy as regent and he signed the Treaty of Trianon in June 1920. Hungary, like Austria, was treated as the successor to the Austro-Hungarian Empire and was obliged to accept reparations and an upper limit on its armed forces of 35,000 men. Also like Austria, Hungary lost large amounts of territory to the other new successor states.

Hungary's losses:

1 Slovakia and Ruthenia went to Czechoslovakia
2 Croatia and Slovenia went to Yugoslavia
3 Transylvania went to Romania
4 Burgenland went to Austria

Hungary's population was reduced from 21 million to 7.5million and many Magyar-speakers were now part of neighbouring countries: Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Rumania. In addition, Hungary lost the majority of her raw materials as these lay in the territories ceded to its neighbours.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Hungarian foreign policy was dominated by a desire to revise the Treaty of Trianon and re-unite the Magyar-speaking lands. In pursuit of this, Hungary signed a friendship treaty with Mussolini's Italy in 1927. This was partly to counter Hungary's isolation following the First World War; its neighbours – Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania – signed a series of agreements known as the Little Entente (1920-21) because all three countries feared that Hungary might go to war in order to reclaim the territories they had received from it in the Treaty of Trianon.

The Treaty of Sèvres: with Turkey (1920)

1 The Straits of the Dardanelles were placed under the control of an International Commission and were to be permanently open to all countries' shipping.
2 Turkey lost all rights to the Sudan and Libya; Turkey had to recognise French Morocco and Tunis, British Egypt and Cyprus.
3 Saudi Arabia (Hedjaz) became independent.
4 Syria, Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine became League of Nations mandates and were to be administered by Britain and France.
5 Greece received some Turkish Aegean islands and Eastern Thrace. In addition, it was to administer the area around Smyrna, for 5 years, initially.
6 Kurdistan was to become autonomous; Armenia was to become independent.

The Treaty of Lausanne (1923)

The terms of the Treaty of Sèvres were significantly altered as a result of The Treaty of Lausanne (1923), following a nationalist revolt and war against Greece led by Mustapha Kemal. This is explained in some detail in the **next section**.

The geopolitical and economic impact of the treaties on Europe

For the Allies, the Paris Peace settlement represented an uneasy compromise between the aims of the 'Big Three'. Crucially, Wilson failed to deliver ratification of the Treaty of Versailles by the US Senate and therefore the USA never joined the League of Nations, nor did it provide a military guarantee for France, which Wilson had promised Clemenceau in 1919.

In the view of the historian **Ruth Henig**:

> It was this critical collapse, rather than the provisions of the peace terms themselves, which ensured that the Treaty of Versailles was never fully accepted or enforced.

The Weimar Republic tarnished by association with the Versailles Treaty

The Paris Peace Treaties helped create a strong nationalist movement in Germany intent on destroying Versailles. The new democratic government of Germany was obliged by the Allies to accept peace terms at Versailles in June 1919. Unfortunately for the Weimar Republic, many nationalists blamed the new Socialist government for agreeing to the Armistice (November 1918) and the Versailles Treaty, claiming that the German army could have fought on, if it had not been stabbed in the back by cowardly, democratic politicians. However, it is much too simplistic to assert that Versailles Treaty made the rise of Hitler and a second world war inevitable.

Hitler's foreign policy was largely shaped by his radical (and irrational) theories about race, and was only partly a reaction to the Treaty of Versailles. None the less, there is no doubt that Hitler aimed to reverse many of Versailles' key terms.

Modern historians are divided about how hard these terms (particularly reparations) hit Germany and point out that Germany could well have been treated much more harshly.

William Carr makes this point:

> Severe as the Treaty of Versailles seemed to many Germans, it should be remembered that Germany might easily have fared much worse. If Clemenceau had had his way, instead of being restrained by Britain and America, the Rhineland would have become an independent state, the Saarland would have been annexed to France and Danzig would have become an integral part of Poland…

It must also be remembered that Germany imposed much harsher peace terms on Russia in March 1918 in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in which Russia was ordered to hand over vast territories to Germany. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the terms caused widespread resentment among Germans at the time; war-guilt, the loss of German-speaking territories, the military restrictions and the way in which its terms were imposed on Germany ensured that.

The early modern political writer, **Machiavelli**, centuries earlier had proffered the following advice to statesmen dealing with enemy states:

> If you see your enemy in the water up to his neck, you will do well to push him under; but if he is only in it up to his knees, you will do well to help him to the shore.

Many historians conclude that the Versailles Treaty constituted a dangerous half-way house between generous (*helping him to the shore*) and harsh (*pushing him under*) treatment of Germany. Germany was punished enough for many Germans to want revenge but insufficiently to be made impotent; by the mid- 1930s Germany, in spite of its loss of territory and raw materials at Versailles, had recovered its strength to become once more the dominant industrial and military power in Europe.

Even in the 1920s, before Hitler's rise to power, many, if not most, German politicians were committed to recovering the lands lost to Poland in the east. Although it is true that during the mid-1920s Gustav Stresemann, the German foreign minister, pursued a policy of '*fulfilment*,' of co-operation between Germany and its former enemies, Britain and France, Stresemann was not prepared to enter into guarantees over Germany's eastern frontiers. By contrast, Stresemann did, as part of the Locarno Pact (1925), recognise Germany's borders in the west, as laid down by Versailles.

None the less Stresemann's success over negotiating agreements with regards to reparations, German entry into the League of Nations and early Allied withdrawal from the Rhineland, showed that Germany could win revisions of the Treaty of Versailles by negotiation.

The British policy of appeasement pursued in the 1930s, e.g. the Anglo-German Naval Convention (1935), was in part due to a feeling that the Treaty of Versailles had been too harsh. Britain was not prepared to stand up to Hitler until 1939.

The economic impact of the Versailles Treaty

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The Versailles Treaty destabilized the German economy. Arguably, it did not have to if the German government had raised taxes to pay for reparations, instead of recklessly printing more paper money.

John Maynard Keynes, the British economist and member of the British delegation in Paris, had highlighted this danger in his biting indictment of the settlement, published in 1919, entitled ***The Economic Consequences of the Peace***.

> Most estimates of a great indemnity from Germany depend on the assumption that she is in the position to conduct in the future a vastly greater trade than she has ever had in the past.

Keynes argued that weakening the German economy, by means of reparations and Germany's territorial losses, would endanger the economic recovery of Europe as a whole, after the war. Reparations were inextricably bound up with the issue of the Allies' war debts. During the First World War, France, Russia, Britain and Italy had all borrowed heavily from the USA and Britain had also lent large sums to its European allies. At the end of the war, America's European allies argued that their ability to repay would depend on extracting reparations from Germany but the USA insisted on repayment of these debts. The USA did not receive any part of the reparations from Germany and had withdrawn from the Reparations Commission, following the US Senate's failure to ratify the Versailles Treaty.

In August 1922, in the 'Balfour Note', Britain announced that it would expect the repayment of the money it had lent its European allies during the war, but that it would only collect back a sum equivalent to what it had borrowed from the USA; this effectively meant that Britain wrote off about half of its allies' war debts. The US government reached individual agreements with its former European allies about scheduling the repayment of the debts they owed it.

The complex situation as regards war debts can be summarised as shown in the table below:

Country	Borrowed from USA	Borrowed from Great Britain	Borrowed from France
France	$3,991 million	$3,030 million	n/a
Russia, Italy (+ some other states)	$3,209 million	$8,141 million	$3,463 million
Great Britain	$4,661 million	n/a	n/a

Based on statistics cited in A. Sauvy, *Histoire economique de la France, 1919-39*, (Paris, 1965)

Reparations were one of the major causes of the 1923 hyperinflation crisis (see below ***the Ruhr Crisis***), and, from 1924, Germany was dangerously reliant on US loans. Gustav Stresemann, the German foreign minister, on the eve of the Wall Street Crash, remarked that, *'Germany is dancing on a volcano'*. German economic prosperity in the mid-late 1920s was extremely fragile and depended on the continuation of US loans.

The historian **Ruth Henig** in her book, ***Versailles and After 1919-1933***, is very critical of US policy with regards to war debts:

> The refusal of successive administrations to help their wartime associates in the task of repairing and restoring the economic fabric of Europe by the granting of credits contributed significantly to the failure to establish in Europe a lasting peace. The strict policy of separating war debts from reparation payments, and insisting on full and early repayment of the former, was…not at all conducive to American long-term economic interests. As a trading nation, the United States was working to build up world trade and prosperity, and this could only be achieved by two-way flows of goods, money and credit. In the 1920s the flow was heavily one-way, and the result was an economically depressed and politically fragile Europe. It was a mistake the United States did not repeat after the Second World War.

The Genoa Conference (April-May 1922)

An international conference was held in Genoa to discuss ways to promote European economic recovery and to consider the issue of disarmament. The period 1919-22 saw Europe's economies struggling to cope with huge levels of government indebtedness, financial instability and the problems associated with adjusting to peacetime economic conditions. The Conference failed to see any significant agreements and during it the German and Soviet representatives withdrew to Rapallo and concluded the Rapallo Pact (see below), much to the anxiety of Britain and France.

The geopolitical impact of the treaties on Central and Eastern Europe

Whereas in Western Europe, the Paris Peace conference did not make radical territorial changes and borders remained largely what they had been in 1914, in Central and Eastern Europe the map of Europe was transformed. Prior to the First World War, Central and Eastern Europe had comprised the large multi-national empires of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and the Ottoman Turks.

In February 1917, Tsarist Russia collapsed and the new Bolshevik government (October 1917) was obliged, under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, to give up Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Finland, Poland, the Ukraine and Georgia. Following Germany's defeat, most of these areas became independent countries, with the exception of Georgia and the Ukraine, which were forced into the new USSR. In the case of Austria-Hungary and the Turkish Empire, towards the end of the First World War, several nationalities took the opportunity to break away and set up their own independent states. The treaties of St Germain, Trianon and Sèvres recognised these new states and tried to define their new borders; however, this proved extremely contentious.

The German Empire had ruled over many Poles and the Treaty of Versailles, in taking away West Prussia, Posen and part of Upper Silesia, united them with Poles who had previously lived within the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empires, creating the independent state of Poland. Poland had last enjoyed an independent existence in the late 18th century before the being partitioned by the Hohenzollerns, Habsburgs and Romanovs.

The successor states

The First World War and the subsequent peace settlement in 1919-1920 shattered the old balance of power that had prevailed for so long between the Austro-Hungarian, German and Russian Empires. The Paris Peace treaties created, or perhaps more accurately, recognised, a series of new small states in Central and Eastern Europe: Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland and, in south-eastern Europe, Yugoslavia. These successor states proved unable to stand up to the aggression of Hitler and Stalin in the 1930s, following Germany's economic recovery and rearmament under the Nazis and the rise of the USSR as an industrial and military power as a result of Stalin's Five Year Plans.

The historian **PMH Bell**, in his book ***The Origins of the Second World War in Europe***, puts this very well:

> The whole of the east European settlement only came about because, in freakish circumstances, Russia and Germany had both been defeated within a year, one after the other. These two great powers had long dominated eastern Europe; indeed, they had ruled most of it. As the giants regained their strength, which was as certain as anything can be in human affairs, their dominance would be restored...[the east European settlement] was founded upon the sand; and as the tides of German and Soviet power rose from the low ebb of 1918-19, the sand would be washed away.

The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire meant the dislocation of what had been an integrated economic unit; the economic life of the region was consequently disrupted by the setting up of the new successor states and, in nearly every case, they were very limited in terms of economic resources. The new republic of Austria was to prove very weak. It had a population of just 8 million and was predominantly agricultural, following the loss of major industrial centres to the new states of Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Border disputes and the issue of ethnic minorities

Perhaps the most disruptive effect of the settlement in Central and Eastern Europe, was that the decisions taken by the peacemakers created both ethnic tensions within the successor states but also serious disputes between countries over borders.

Woodrow Wilson later admitted that he had underestimated how difficult it would prove to implement national self-determination in Central and Eastern Europe:

> When I gave utterance to those words [that all nations had a right to self-determination] I said them without the knowledge that nationalities existed which are coming to us day after day.

However, again, it is important to note that the settlement made in Paris largely reflected changes that had already been made on the ground in 1918-20, sometimes the result of fighting between the new states.

Given the complex pattern of ethnic settlement within Central and Eastern Europe, it was impossible to draw up new borders in 1919-20 without creating large ethnic minorities inside most of the successor states. The Paris settlement resulted in nine states - Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Romania (not a new state but it was awarded Transylvania which contained 1.5 million Magyars, a decision hugely resented by the Hungarian government), Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia - containing almost 19 million people as national minorities out of a total population of approximately 98 million.

Czechoslovakia

This ethnic diversity was particularly true of Czechoslovakia and Poland. In the case of Czechoslovakia, six separate racial groupings lived in the new state, including over 3 million Germans in the Sudetenland. Many of the 3 million Slovaks resented the way in which the Czechs dominated the new state and wanted greater self-rule. Hitler exploited both the resentment of the Sudeten Germans and Slovak nationalism in 1938-39 in order to break up Czechoslovakia. In addition, in 1938, Hitler encouraged Hungary and Poland to make territorial demands on Czechoslovakia, which resulted in the cession of Teschen to Poland and part of Ruthenia to Hungary.

These demands reflected long-running border disputes between Czechoslovakia and Poland and Czechoslovakia and Hungary, stemming from the peace treaties of 1919-20. Teschen had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire; its population was a mix of Germans, Poles and Czechs, with the Poles the largest group. In 1920 the Allies decided at the Spa Conference to award Poland the town of Teschen but the surrounding area, including the Karvin coalmines, to Czechoslovakia. The dispute over Teschen undermined relations between Poland and Czechoslovakia throughout the inter-war years.

Vilna

Another particularly bitter dispute over borders erupted into fighting in 1919, between Poland and Lithuania. The contested area was Vilna, which had been Lithuania's capital in the Middle Ages. After fighting in 1919-20 between Poland and Lithuania over Vilna, Vilna came under Polish control until 1922. The League of Nations, in 1922, tried to get Poland to agree to hand over Vilna to Lithuania but failed. The following year, Britain and France recognised Vilna as part of Poland but diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Poland were broken off until 1938.

German minorities

It has already been noted above that the settlement of Germany's eastern frontiers at Versailles left many Germans resentful of the fact that German minorities had been handed over to other countries, particularly in the case of Czechoslovakia and Poland. In addition, many Austrian Germans resented the peace settlement's ban on the union of Germany and Austria. Hitler exploited the resentment of the German minority in Czechoslovakia in 1938-39 to destroy it. Similarly, Hitler played on pro-union sentiment in Austria in March 1938 in order to justify the Anschluss, when he ordered his troops to occupy Austria. The transfer of West Prussia, Posen and part of Upper Silesia to Poland, and the loss of Danzig, permanently damaged German-Polish relations throughout the inter-war period. Germany also resented the seizure of Memel, which had a mainly German-speaking population, by Lithuania in 1923. The Treaty of Versailles had taken the

port of Memel off Germany but had not determined its final status; this was still not decided by 1923, hence Lithuania, losing patience, occupied it.

In absorbing Austria and the Sudetenland in 1938, Hitler was not opposed by either Britain or France. The British government was not prepared to act in defence of the Paris settlement because it was felt, with hindsight, that decisions made in 1919 were in some cases unfair and inconsistent; national self-determination had not been applied to the Sudeten Germans and, if many Austrians wanted union with Germany, as they appeared to in 1938, Britain felt that they should not oppose it.

Hitler's invasion of Poland in September 1939, which triggered the declaration of war by Britain and France, was, in part, the consequence of his plans for winning lebensraum in the east and of expanding up to the Ural Mountains, but it also reflected German bitterness at the loss of West Prussia, Posen and part of Upper Silesia in 1919.

The impact of the peace settlement on the Ottoman Empire

The terms of the Treaty of Sèvres provoked a nationalist uprising in Turkey led by Mustapha Kemal, which led to the establishment of a republic, replacing rule by the Sultan. Turkey went to war successfully with Greece in 1920-23. At one stage, it looked as if a military confrontation might occur between the advancing Turkish forces and an allied occupation force comprising Italian, French and British troops. In the so-called 'Chanak Incident', Britain appeared ready to fight but France and Italy had no intention of doing so; in the end, all three military contingents were withdrawn. So, within a very short space of time, the Allies had demonstrated that they were not prepared to use force in order to defend the Paris settlement.

By the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the Allies recognised that Turkey had regained Smyrna, Eastern Thrace, part of Armenia and some of the Aegean islands. In addition, the Treaty of Sèvres' clauses relating to the imposition of international control of the Straits and the establishment of an international commission to oversee Turkey's finances were dropped. The Straits were, however, to remain a demilitarised zone.

Italian anger at the Paris Settlement

Italians were angry at the gains made by Italy in 1919. Italian nationalists and indeed the Italian government claimed that, in accordance with the Treaty of London of 1915, Italy should have received Fiume, which became a free city, and Dalmatia, which went to Yugoslavia. The nationalist poet, Gabriele D'Annunzio, coined the phrase *'the mutilated victory'*, to characterise the disappointment Italian patriots felt at having won the war but 'lost the peace'.

A force led by D'Annunzio occupied Fiume in September 1919, in protest at the Italian government's decision to evacuate it. Prime Minister Francesco Nitti felt unable to drive D'Annunzio out, so the occupation continued until Giovanni Giolitti returned as Prime Minister and ejected D'Annunzio and his paramilitaries in December 1920. Under the Treaty of Rapallo (November 1920), Italy recognised that Fiume should have the status of a free city.

This nationalist anger helped Benito Mussolini to power in 1922, as many Italians wanted a government that would take a stronger line in projecting Italy's interests and Mussolini's Fascist Party appeared to promise that. Mussolini pleased nationalists by successfully negotiating with Yugoslavia for the transfer of Fiume to Italy (1924). However, Mussolini had also recognised that Dalmatia should remain part of Yugoslavia.

The Soviet Union's position after the First World War

Although foreign intervention on the side of the Whites in the Russian Civil War proved unsuccessful in overthrowing the Bolsheviks, British military intervention in the Baltic region did ensure that Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Finland became independent and were not reconquered by the Bolsheviks. By the end of 1919 it was clear the Bolshevik government would survive, though 1920 saw an invasion of the Ukraine by Polish and French troops which forced the Bolsheviks to hand over part of the Ukraine and White Russia to Poland by the Treaty of Riga (1921).

The Failure of Worldwide Revolution

In 1919, in order to facilitate worldwide revolution and to ensure their own ascendancy over foreign communist parties, the Bolsheviks created an international organisation of Communist parties called the Third International or Comintern.

As predicted by Lenin, communist revolutions broke out in Berlin, Bavaria and Hungary in 1919. However, contrary to Lenin's expectations, all of these risings failed even though Bela Kun was in power in Hungary for over 4 months. Moreover, Lenin's assumption that Polish workers would rise up when the Red Army invaded Poland proved unfounded and the ensuing Russo-Polish War (1920-21) ended in retreat and humiliation for the Bolsheviks.

Permanent Revolution versus *Socialism in One Country*

With no prospect of communist revolutions occurring elsewhere for the foreseeable future, the Russian leadership argued furiously about the direction of Soviet foreign policy. Trotsky was still passionately committed to organising worldwide revolution and became the main spokesman for the policy of 'Permanent Revolution'. On the other hand, Stalin promoted an alternative strategy, known as 'Socialism in One Country', which argued that international revolution must be postponed and in the meantime the USSR had to be modernised and a socialist economy created before the USSR could seek to export socialist revolution abroad. The majority of the Party backed Stalin's policy at the Party Congress in 1925.

Soviet isolation in the 1920s

As early as 1921, Lenin recognised the need to develop commercial links with the West in order to help rebuild Russia's shattered economy after nearly a decade of war and civil war. The search for more foreign trade was an important element in Lenin's New Economic Policy (1921). The Russian Foreign Ministry was successful in brokering trade agreements with Great Britain, Poland, Finland, Germany and Turkey in 1921.

In spite of signing trade agreements with many European countries, the USSR remained diplomatically isolated. It was not until 1924 that Great Britain officially recognised the USSR and not until 1933 that the USA did so. The USSR did not join the League of Nations until 1934.

The Treaty of Rapallo (1922): the two 'pariah' (outcast) states come together

It was perhaps unsurprising that the country with which the USSR developed its closest links in the 1920s was Germany, because both countries were 'outcasts'; the USSR because of its Communist ideology and its commitment to promoting worldwide revolution and Germany because of its alleged responsibility for starting the First World War. Neither was invited to join the League of Nations in 1920.

Under the Rapallo Pact, the USSR and Germany agreed to:

⇒ Trade and financial co-operation

⇒ Secret military agreements, including provision for Germany to secretly test military equipment on Russian soil, thus evading the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty.

⇒ Co-operate against Poland because both Germany and the USSR had lost territory to the newly recreated Poland.

This Russo-German agreement was reinforced by another treaty signed by the two countries in 1926: the Treaty of Berlin.

The establishment and impact of the mandate system

The League of Nations' Covenant laid down arrangements for the former colonies of Germany and the provinces detached from the Turkish Empire. They were to be allotted to various states under 'mandates' making the country concerned responsible for the good government of the territory under its administration to a special Mandates Commission of the League.

The decision to establish the mandate system was reached only after considerable disagreement among the Allied leaders. Some of the British Dominions - South Africa, Australia and New Zealand - wanted to annex respectively German South-west Africa, New Guinea and Samoa. Japan demanded the right to annex Germany's colonies north of the equator (a demand secretly approved by the British government back in 1917).

Woodrow Wilson, however, was insistent that his Fourteen Points be adhered to and that no former German or Turkish colony or possession should be annexed by another country; instead he advocated that they should be administered under the direction of the League of Nations. Eventually, Jan Smuts of South Africa proposed a compromise that was accepted by the Allied statesmen:

Three categories of Mandates were created, reflecting how developed socially and economically the territory was.

Categories of Mandate

A This was for the most developed areas and comprised Syria, Mesopotamia and Palestine, all former Turkish possessions. They were given provisional independence but were subject to Allied administrative control until they were capable of full independence. Syria was assigned to France; Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine were assigned to Britain. France subsequently divided Syria into two mandates of Syria and Lebanon. Britain in 1921 decided to establish the state of Transjordan.

B The former German colonies of German East Africa, Togoland and the Cameroons were given 'Trusteeship' status. Britain (Tanganyika), France (Togoland and the Cameroons) and Belgium (Ruanda-Urundi or Rwanda-Burundi) were given direct responsibility for the administration of these mandates but were subject to certain regulations designed to safeguard the rights of the mandates' native peoples. Cameroon and Togo were given independence in 1960; Tanganyika became independent in 1961; Rwanda and Burundi gained independence in 1962.

C The remaining former German territories, because of the sparseness of population, isolation, size, and other circumstances were to be administered as 'integral portions' of the territory of the mandatory power, i.e. virtual annexation. These included: South West Africa (now Namibia, allocated to South Africa), New Guinea (allocated to Australia), Western Samoa (now Samoa, allocated to New Zealand), and, the islands north of the Equator in the western Pacific (allocated to Japan).

Mandates were allocated to particular countries in May 1919. Countries that were entrusted with Mandates had to report every year to the League but the Mandates Commission had limited powers and could not ask for oral evidence as opposed to written evidence (relating to the conduct of the powers granted the mandates).

The Middle Eastern Mandates

Many British and French politicians saw the mandates as effectively newly acquired colonies.

The British Foreign Secretary, **Lord Curzon**, in 1920 declared that:

> It is quite a mistake to suppose...that under the Covenant of the League...the gift of the mandate rests with the League of Nations. It does not do so. It rests with the Powers who have conquered the territories, which it then falls to them to distribute, and it was in these circumstances that the mandate for Palestine and Mesopotamia was conferred upon and accepted by us, and that the mandate for Syria was conferred upon and accepted by France.

The Treaty of Sèvres (1920) dealt with the Turkish Empire, stripping the Turks of their territories in the Middle East and North Africa. The Treaty laid down that most of the Middle East would come under the jurisdiction of the 'Mandate' system. The League of Nations authorised Britain and France to administer various parts of the Middle East in preparation for them becoming independent. The Arabs saw this as a thinly veiled takeover of the region by Britain and France.

France was given Syria to look after (which it partitioned in two to create the states of Syria and Lebanon), whilst Britain was mandated to administer Palestine and Mesopotamia (Iraq). Britain decided in 1921 to create the state of Transjordan (Jordan). The only Arab territory to be granted total independence in 1920 was the area later known as Saudi Arabia, which was ruled by Sherif Hussein. Violent Arab protests against French and British control occurred in 1920 and 1921. In order to appease Arab anger, the British installed Hussein's sons, Abdullah and Feisal, as amirs of Transjordan and Mesopotamia. However, neither Transjordan nor Mesopotamia, was granted independence, at this stage, and both were obliged to maintain a close alliance with Britain.

Transjordan

In 1923, Britain recognised Transjordan as an independent state ruled by Amir Abdullah, but still under British authority as part of its mandate of Palestine. Through the 1920s and 1930s, Britain allowed Abdullah more and more independence, whilst retaining substantial influence over Transjordan's government and armed forces. Britain formally granted Transjordan full independence in 1946; Abdullah took the title of king.

Iraq (Mesopotamia)

In 1930, in preparation for ending their mandate in Iraq (formerly Mesopotamia), Britain signed an Anglo-Iraqi Treaty with King Feisal. This provided for a 25-year military alliance and the retention of British air bases in Iraq. In 1932 Britain ended the mandate and Iraq gained its independence and became a member of the League of Nations.

Syria and Lebanon

France proved more reluctant to relinquish its mandates of Syria and Lebanon, because of their strategic importance and because the French government believed that if it granted its mandates independence it would encourage France's North African colonies to expect similar treatment.

In 1936, the French government drafted treaties with both Syria and Lebanon, granting them independence with the provisos that France would be consulted in the formulation of foreign policy and that France would retain military bases in the two countries. However, the French Chamber refused to ratify the treaties and full independence for the two countries was delayed until 1946 and then only after heavy pressure on France from Britain.

Arab-Jewish tensions in the British mandate of Palestine

Tensions between Arabs and Jews living in the mandate of Palestine escalated in the 1920s. They did so for a number of reasons, including the disappointment of both peoples at the way in which the British had, in their view, gone back on the promises made during the First World War. The main cause of growing friction, however, was the increasing numbers and prosperity of the Jewish settlers in Palestine. In 1918, there were 60,000 Jews living in Palestine (compared to 500,000 Arabs); by 1928, the Arab population had reached 600,000 whilst Jewish numbers had risen to 150,000.

Mounting violence after the Second World War, coupled with Britain's financial indebtedness, led Britain to refer the problem of Palestine to the United Nations in 1947. The United Nations decided to partition Palestine in to separate Arab and Jewish states. However, in 1948, when the British pulled out, war erupted between the new state of Israel and its Arab neighbours.

Enforcement of the provisions of the treaties

Although the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-20 officially restored international peace, it is important to note that there were plenty of conflicts raging in the years immediately after the First World War ended.

Sally Marks, in her book ***The Illusion of Peace*** (New York, 2003), makes this point very well:

> The advent of peace was highly relative. The major powers were no longer in bloody collision, but civil war raged in Russia, Ireland, China, Turkey... Foreign troops remained in Russia; the Baltic area was a battleground; and Poland invaded Russia while Hungary marched briefly on Poland, Romania and Slovakia. There was fighting on the Finnish frontier and in Fiume; in Silesia Germans and Poles waged an undeclared war; most Balkan borders were aflame; and in Anatolia the Turks fought the Greeks, backed by the British. Yet the world was officially at peace.

Whatever the merits or faults of the terms of the peace treaties signed in 1919-20, the big question hanging over the settlement was how far the Allies would be prepared to act to enforce the terms in the years following 1919-20.

The historian **William Carr** makes that point succinctly:

> To the discerning it was clear from the beginning that the Versailles settlement would last only as long as the victorious powers were in a position to enforce it on a bitterly resentful people.

Within four days of the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, the British newspaper, ***The Times***, produced the following analysis of the issues surrounding its enforcement,

> If there is one country that the Germans are determined to get even with it is France. The Germans will try by every means to ...isolate France... [to] render the pledges of the United States null and void is the dominating idea of the individual German... and one hears talk about a next war, first with Poland, later with France. Never was it more necessary for the Allies to watch Germany closely.

As already explained above, the Allied leaders had held differing views on how the enforcement of the peace settlement could be ensured. Woodrow Wilson had seen the establishment of the League of the Nations as the key to both maintaining the settlement and world peace. By contrast, Clemenceau had little faith in the League of Nations and placed his hopes primarily on securing an Anglo-American guarantee of military assistance for France in the event of an attack by Germany.

Q. What problems were there in enforcing the Paris Peace settlement?

1. German resentment at the alleged unfairness and harshness of Versailles.
2. The Anglo-American guarantee to France (see below) never materialised.
3. The League of Nations proved flawed from the start, most especially because of the USA's failure to join.
4. The USA retreated increasingly into isolationism in the 1920s, although it did play an important part in international agreements over reparations and naval disarmament.
5. The USSR remained isolated throughout the 1920s - with the exception of its agreements with Germany, notably the Rapallo Pact (1922) - because of the apparent threat its Communist government posed to the rest of capitalist Europe.
6. Italy was aggrieved at the peace settlement because many Italians felt that their country had received too little territory. From 1922, Mussolini led Italy and was committed to revising the settlement in Italy's favour.
7. Japan was not interested in the European aspects of the Paris Peace settlement.

All of the above points combined to mean that in practice enforcement of the peace settlement would fall largely to Britain and France. However,

8. Britain and France failed to agree on a policy towards Germany.

Instead, British politicians proved increasingly open to the idea of revising the Versailles Treaty and making concessions to Germany, whilst French politicians, particularly in the early 1920s, were keen to keep Germany weak and enforce rigidly Versailles' terms. This led to serious disagreements over issues such as the enforcement of the reparations and demilitarization clauses of the Versailles Treaty.

Q. Why was Great Britain reluctant to defend the Paris peace settlement?

1. British governments in the inter-war years were very focused on the problems associated with trying to maintain their colonial empire during a period when independence movements were gathering momentum. This preoccupation and Britain's financial indebtedness following the First World War, explain in part Britain's desire to avoid diplomatic and military conflicts in Europe.

The historian **Ruth Henig** concludes that:

> The divisions [military forces] were not there to give substance to any formal military undertaking to France or to the League unless the government was prepared to cut down on its wider world commitments. Successive British governments opted to maintain, as far as possible, the status and responsibilities of a world power even if that meant an inability to guarantee in any tangible way the political settlement in Europe.

2. Britain's financial and military strength was undermined by the First World War and led to a reduction in Britain's armed forces during the 1920s, from 300,000 in 1919 to 180,000 by the early 1930s. This, therefore, is a further factor in accounting for Britain's preference to make concessions to Germany over the Versailles Treaty rather than insisting on inflexible enforcement of its terms or concluding a military pact with France. Britain cut its military spending from £604 million in 1919 to £111 million in 1922 and it remained more or less at this level for the next ten years. Consequently, in both 1930 and 1931, Britain's senior military commanders told their government that Britain did not have the resources required to intervene militarily in Europe.

3. A widespread determination among the British public and politicians to avoid a repetition of the sufferings of the 1914-18 war, contributed to a desire to avoid diplomatic and military commitments that might entangle Britain in a future conflict – one that most people (rightly) assumed would be even worse than the First World War.

The professor of military history at Oxford, **Sir Charles Oman**, wrote in 1922:

> For my own part, I believe that as the world realises more and more what the horrors of the next war would be, everyone save a Bolshevik, must see that such a war ought never to be allowed to come about.

France's stance

France in the 1920s and 1930s felt very insecure, particularly after its failure to secure a military alliance with either the USA or Britain after the First World War. France therefore tried to keep Germany weak by ensuring that the maximum amount was extracted from her in terms of reparations and by showing a willingness to send French troops into Germany to demonstrate its determination that Germany comply with the terms of Versailles.

In addition, France signed military agreements with Poland (1921) and Czechoslovakia (1924), aimed at creating security arrangements that encircled Germany from both the west and east; however, France's military commitments in these treaties were very limited and intense Czech-Polish rivalry further undermined the value of these agreements.

Anxious about the possibility of German economic and military revival, France rejected any suggestion that she might participate in any measure of disarmament and maintained a standing army of 600,000 throughout the 1920s.

The incident that most revealed Anglo-French tensions over the enforcement of Versailles was the Ruhr occupation in 1923 (see below **The Ruhr Crisis**). Britain was openly critical of this attempt by the French and Belgians to coerce the Germans into resuming reparation payments after the Germans had defaulted.

The Ruhr occupation proved an embarrassing mistake for France and it failed to force Germany to comply with its demands for reparations. Consequently, the French government was more prepared to consider a more collaborative approach with Germany, seeking to secure its compliance with Versailles by means of negotiation. The high-point of this more positive French approach was at Locarno in 1925, where, the French, British and German foreign ministers spear-headed a significant series of agreements aimed at easing tensions arising out of the Treaty of Versailles.

Unfortunately, the improvement in French-German relations did not survive the advent of the Great Depression and Hitler's accession to power in Germany in 1933. Even during the so-called 'Locarno honeymoon' of the mid-1920s, French anxieties about their security remained and this explains the decision reached in 1928 to build the hugely expensive system of defences on the German border, known as the Maginot Line; a massive project still not complete at the outbreak of the Second World War.

US isolationism—the retreat from the Anglo-American Guarantee

As already discussed in several of the sections above, arguably the biggest problem associated with enforcing the Paris Peace settlement was the USA's failure to sign the Treaty of Versailles and its consequent absence from the League of Nations, the lynch-pin for future peace in the eyes of President Wilson. Furthermore, as explained above, the USA did not carry through Wilson's pledge of a military guarantee for France and, with that failure, Britain also refused to honour its guarantee to France because it had been conditional on ratification by the USA.

Although Woodrow Wilson had been a key architect of the Paris peace settlement, for the USA to be bound to its terms required ratification (formal endorsement) by the Senate. President Wilson campaigned tirelessly in 1919-20 in the United States

(suffering a stroke in the process) to try to win support for ratification of the Versailles Treaty and US membership of the League. However, he failed both in November 1919 and March 1920 to achieve the two-thirds majority required in the Senate.

Q. Why was there so much opposition in the Senate to the Treaty of Versailles?

⇒ The Republicans had a majority in the Senate and they were much less prepared than the Democrats to entertain the notion of committing the USA to act as a world policeman as part of the League of Nations. Opposition to ratifying the treaty focused predominantly on membership of the League and the terms of the League's Covenant.

⇒ Some US politicians had reservations about other aspects of the Versailles Treaty, notably the award of Shantung (Shandong) to Japan.

The key clause in the League's Covenant was Article 10 under which members of the League promised to defend each other's borders and independence. Even though the Council of the League could only *advise* on how this commitment should be carried out, rather than compel members to take a particular course of action, many US politicians were alarmed at the prospect of the League relying heavily on the USA for enforcement of its decisions.

Wilson declared in 1919 that Article 10 constituted *'a moral, not a legal obligation'* and that the US Congress would be *'free to put its own interpretation upon it in all cases that call for action. It is binding in conscience only, not in law.'* In spite of this attempt at reassurance, many senators, led by Senator William Borah, campaigned against US membership of the League.

Senator **Henry Cabot Lodge** spoke for many US politicians who had reservations about membership of the League as it was presently constituted, when, in August 1919, in a speech to the Senate, he declared:

> I object in the strongest possible way to having the USA agree, directly or indirectly, to be controlled by an organisation which may at any time be drawn in to deal with internal conflicts in other countries, no matter what those conflicts might be. It must be made perfectly clear that American soldiers can never be engaged in war or ordered anywhere except by the constitutional authorities of the USA.

However, it should be noted that a majority of senators were not opposed to League membership in any form and many would have backed a more limited US involvement in the League, with, for example, the USA not signing up to Article 10 of the Covenant. Wilson certainly did not help his cause by rigidly insisting that there could be no modification of the treaty – that it had to be accepted in its entirety without reservations.

In March 1920, the Treaty of Versailles with reservations (which Wilson continued to oppose) received a majority of votes from the US Senate, but **not** the two-thirds majority required for ratification. This meant that the USA ended up signing a separate peace treaty with Germany in August 1921; this was more or less the terms of the Treaty of Versailles with the Covenant of the League of Nations removed. The failure to ratify the Versailles Treaty in 1919-20 also meant that the USA played no part in enforcing its terms, so, for example, the US government withdrew its representative from the Reparations Commission in February 1921.

Crucially, the US Senate was also opposed to the Anglo-American guarantee for France, which Wilson had signed up to in June 1919. Therefore, France failed to get an American pledge of support in the event of attack by Germany and the British government consequently was also absolved from its guarantee to France.

On several occasions in the early 1920s, British politicians did consider the possibility of a military guarantee to France but this never happened. The closest Britain got to agreeing a security pact with France was at the Cannes Conference in January 1922, where Lloyd George put forward proposals for a limited guarantee to France. The subsequent negotiations with the French government collapsed. Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary, revived the idea of an Anglo-French alliance in 1925 but the British cabinet rejected his proposal.

Disarmament

The Treaty of Versailles stated that the disarmament of Germany was imposed *'in order to render possible the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments of all nations.'*

Articles 8 and 9 of the League Covenant referred to the League's aim to reduce armaments levels:

Article 8. Plans are to be drafted by the Council for the general reduction of national armaments.

Article 9. A permanent advisory commission on armaments is to be appointed

The League of Nations Disarmament Commission

It was given as one of its tasks the checking of indiscriminate sale of arms by private manufacturers. Preparatory talks at Geneva took five years (1926-31) to produce agreement for discussion between government representatives. It was not until 1932 that a Disarmament Conference met at Geneva (see below).

The Washington Conference (1921-22)

A conference of major naval powers met in Washington in November 1921, which led to a series of treaties signed between December 1921 and February 1922. The conference was called very much at the initiative of the US government, with the US Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, playing the leading role once it convened, putting forward proposals for naval disarmament.

One reason why the USA was keen to arrange for an international agreement on the Pacific was the unstable nature of China in the early 1920s; following the death of President Yuan Shi-kai in 1916, China entered a period known as the 'warlord era' in which rival generals competed for power. The weakness of China had, in the past, invited foreign intervention and the USA was anxious to prevent further

foreign incursions into China after the First World War. The US government was also seeking to reduce its military expenditure and therefore wanted to avoid a new naval arms race in the Pacific.

Charles Evans Hughes' proposals formed the basis of the Five-Power Treaty signed in February 1922 (see below), which established a ratio for the replacement tonnage of capital ships (battleships and heavy cruisers) possessed by the USA, Britain, Japan, France and Italy. France had unsuccessfully objected to Italy being put on the same level of naval strength as the French navy. The Five Powers also agreed that no new military or naval bases should be built in the Pacific region either west of Hawaii or north of Singapore; this favoured Japan and was, in part, a concession designed to make its inferior ratio of capital ships acceptable to the Japanese government.

The USA pushed strongly for the Four-Power Treaty, which was signed in December 1921. This marked the end of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that dated back to 1902, to which the US government was very hostile.

The historian **Margaret Lamb** explains US antipathy towards the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (which was due for renewal in 1921):

> The [Anglo-Japanese] alliance seemed to the Americans not merely to impose an ineffective constraint on Japan, but also to epitomise the system of imperialist diplomacy the USA had set itself to displace.

The USA's 'Open-Door' Policy towards China

The Nine-Power Treaty, signed in February 1922, focused on the position and status of China and its relations with the international community. The USA, since 1899/1900, had advocated an 'Open Door' policy towards China, under which no country would seek to annex or partition any part of China; this was prompted by just such moves by the French, British, Russian and Japanese in the mid to late 19th century.

The 'Open Door' Policy was now incorporated into the Nine-Power treaty, much to the satisfaction of the US government. However, China was unhappy with the Washington Treaties in that they did not immediately bring about an end to the system of unequal treaties, under which foreign powers in the past had extracted concessions from China. In the case of Shandong (Shantung), for example, Japan had agreed to evacuate its troops but not for the time being.

The terms of the Washington Treaties:

1. *Four-Power Treaty* (USA, Britain, France & Japan); December 1921

    a. Ended Anglo-Japanese alliance.
    b. Agreed to recognise each other's possessions in the Pacific and, in the event of controversy, attempt to reach a diplomatic solution.

2. ***Five-Power Treaty*** (USA, Britain, Japan, France, & Italy); February 1922

   a. Agreed to a total tonnage ratio in capital warships, fixed at 5-5-3-1.75-1.75 respectively.
   b. Introduced a 10-year 'building holiday' on capital ships.
   c. The USA and Britain agreed not to construct new fortresses or naval bases in the western Pacific.

3. ***Nine-Power Treaty*** (USA, Britain, France, Japan, Italy, Belgium, China, Netherlands & Portugal); February 1922

   a. Agreed to respect China's sovereignty.
   b. Agreed to the 'Open Door', whereby all countries were to have equal trading rights in China.
   c. Agreed to discuss problems of common interest.

Q. What were the results of the Washington Treaties?

1. They constituted a positive step towards preventing a naval arms race.
2. They signalled the end of Britain's naval domination, as Britain accepted parity with the USA.
3. They marked a partial withdrawal of the British from East Asia and meant that US power in East Asia was now greater than that of Britain.
4. Ships under 10,000 tons were not restricted, e.g. destroyers, light cruisers and submarines.
5. The treaties did not cover land forces.
6. In spite of domestic criticism of the Washington Treaties, Japan was prepared to accept the terms throughout the 1920s.
7. The treaties did not lay down any mechanism for enforcement in the event of a country breaching their terms and they failed to prevent Japanese aggression from 1931 onwards.
8. The USSR was not invited to the Washington Conference; this was a significant omission and a weakness in the Washington Treaties because the USSR was potentially a major force in the Pacific.

Historians would regard Charles Evans Hughes' verdict on the Washington Naval Treaties as hugely over-optimistic. At the time, **Charles Evans Hughes** claimed that:

> When this agreement takes effect we shall have gone further in the direction of securing an enduring peace than by anything that has yet been done.

None the less, there is no doubt that the Washington Naval Treaties constituted progress in terms of arms limitations and regional co-operation.

London Naval Conference (1930)

This conference, attended by the USA, France, Britain, Italy and Japan, sought to extend both the duration and terms of the Washington Naval Treaties (1921-22). In particular, the USA and Britain were looking to avoid the expense of a naval race by establishing limitations on cruisers and submarines, which had not been covered by the 1922 treaty. There had been an earlier conference on cruiser ratios, held in Geneva in 1927, but this had proved unsuccessful.

At the London Conference, all five powers approved the extension of the Washington Naval Treaty's moratorium (freeze) on building capital ships for a further 5 years. The five powers also drew up and agreed to regulations on the conduct of submarine warfare.

With reference to limitations on cruisers and destroyers, however, France and Italy refused to sign any agreement. At the Washington Conference, France had been prepared to accept parity with Italy in terms of warships but, at the London Conference, France opposed parity with Italy in terms of cruisers and destroyers. The French argued that their defence requirements meant that France needed sufficient naval forces in the North Sea, Atlantic and the Mediterranean whereas Italy was only a Mediterranean power.

US-British-Japanese Agreement on Cruisers

The USA, Britain and Japan, however, eventually did accept a ratio for light cruisers and destroyers of 10:10:7, respectively, and a separate ratio of 10:10:6 for heavy cruisers. The Japanese government had pressed for a 10:10:7 ratio for all types of cruiser but was prepared to accept the 10:10:6 ratio for heavy cruisers that the USA insisted on, following the concession by the USA that there could be some flexibility in terms of implementing the cruiser provisions, allowing Japan scope for exceeding the agreed ratio on heavy cruisers. Notwithstanding this, some elements within the Japanese navy were highly critical of the London Naval Treaty's terms.

London Naval Conference (1935-36)

The naval limitations laid down by both the Washington Naval Treaty (1922) and the London Naval Treaty (1930) were due to expire in 1936 and so a second London Naval Conference opened in December 1935. However, Japan insisted on parity (equality) with the USA and Britain in terms of ratios of fleets and walked out of the conference when the USA and Britain refused to concede this. The USA, Britain and France did agree to a six-year moratorium on building large light cruisers (8-10,000 tons).

The Geneva Disarmament Conference (1932-34)

The League of Nations set up a preparatory disarmament commission in 1926 and it spent the next five years preparing for the Disarmament Conference, which met in Geneva between 1932 and 1934. The underlying issue and obstacle to agreement at Geneva was the balance of military forces between France and Germany. The German government, from 1932, that is before Hitler became chancellor (January 1933), insisted on parity with France; either France (whose army numbered 600,000) should disarm down to Germany's level (100,000) or Germany should be allowed to rearm.

Neither scenario was acceptable to France, because French politicians were all too aware of Germany's larger population and industrial capacity.

The French representatives at the Disarmament Conference insisted that they would not agree to any scheme that gave Germany military parity with France, unless:

- ⇒ Cast-iron guarantees over inspection and verification procedures were put in place first (to ensure German adherence to any agreement)
- ⇒ Additional measures, such as the establishment of an international peace-keeping force, were implemented

The historian **Graham Ross**, in his book ***The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System***, represents the French position in the following terms:

> The plans put forward in the course of 1932, [by the French] envisaged at least the earmarking of units for service under the League if not the creation of a full-scale international force. When Daladier became Prime Minister (one day after Hitler became Chancellor) he added an emphasis on effective supervision and inspection. Disarmament would have to proceed by stages; procedures for supervision and inspection would have to be thoroughly tested before reductions in arms and manpower could take place. In short, France wanted security before disarmament.

Anglo-American sympathy towards Germany

At Geneva, both the US and British representatives showed considerable sympathy towards German claims, arguing that the Versailles Treaty had been too harsh and that revisions should be made; they saw it as unreasonable that Germany should still be obliged, a decade and a half after the First World War had ended, to limit its armed forces as severely as Versailles laid down. Neither Britain, nor the USA, was prepared to contemplate giving France the additional guarantees for its security that it was seeking.

In June 1932, President Hoover of the USA put forward a proposal that distinguished between offensive and defensive weapons and advocated the complete abolition of offensive weapons and a reduction in defensive weapons by one-third. This distinction proved much more difficult to make in practice than President Hoover implied and his proposal got nowhere.

Nor, when the Disarmament Conference adjourned in July 1932, was there any sign of a breakthrough in the deadlock over the balance of armaments between France and Germany. The German government made it clear that they would play no further part in the Disarmament Conference, unless parity of armaments with France was accepted. Britain then arranged a five-power conference (Britain, the USA, Germany, Italy and France) at Geneva in December 1932 in an attempt to reach a compromise that would bring the Germans back into the Disarmament Conference. Eventually the five powers agreed on the principle that Germany should enjoy *'equality of rights in a system which would provide security for all nations'*; this proved sufficient for Germany to re-enter the Disarmament Conference.

Before the Disarmament Conference reconvened, however, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany. Hitler detested the League of Nations and was just looking for a pretext to extricate Germany from the multi-lateral disarmament talks, so that he was free to embark on rapid rearmament (although this had to wait another year or so because Hitler had to prioritise consolidating his political position domestically and tackling Germany's economic problems).

Ramsay MacDonald's proposals

When the Conference reconvened, Ramsay MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, outlined a scheme whereby France, Germany, Italy and Poland would gradually move, over the course of 5 years, towards approximate parity in terms of numbers of troops. In an attempt to reassure the French, MacDonald also proposed that Germany would not have full access to all categories of weapons and that French forces stationed in parts of the French Empire would be in addition to the level fixed for the European armies, so that France's total armed forces would still be greater than Germany's. However, MacDonald's proposals met with stiff criticism from France and more restrained objections from Germany. The Conference again adjourned in May 1933.

Germany leaves the Disarmament Conference and the League

When the Disarmament Conference reconvened in October 1933 Hitler withdrew from the Disarmament Conference, using France's refusal to allow German parity as an excuse, and also gave notice that Germany would leave the League of Nations. The Disarmament Conference was effectively killed off by the German walk-out, although, having adjourned in October 1933, it briefly reconvened for a final fruitless session in May 1934.

The impasse over the balance of armed forces between France and Germany had given Hitler exactly what he had been hoping for. Hitler now felt free to rearm openly, which he proceeded to do. German rearmament was stepped up in 1933-34 but it was in March 1935 that Hitler publicly and decisively repudiated the military restrictions laid down at Versailles when he announced the reintroduction of conscription and that he would build up a peacetime army of 550,000 men.

The League of Nations

It has been noted already in the section on the Treaty of Versailles, that the League of Nations, as set up by the peace settlement, was a compromise between the proposals of Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau. The historians **Margaret Lamb** and **Nicholas Tarling** have described the nature of the new international organisation in the following terms:

> The concept which emerged was essentially an Anglo-American one which stressed the deliberative, consultative functions of the new body rather than providing it with coercive powers...If...a state resorted to war, then it was envisaged that trade and financial sanctions would be applied, but military sanctions required the unanimous support of the whole Council which could only recommend to member governments what forces they might individually contribute.

At Versailles, Clemenceau had unsuccessfully pressed for a League of Nations that was a smaller organisation with an army capable of enforcing peace and security. Having failed to get his way, Clemenceau appears to have had little faith in the League's ability to keep international peace. The French commander-in-chief, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, characterized the League as *'a queer Anglo-Saxon fancy not likely to be of the slightest importance in practice.'* These doubts were certainly shared by some British politicians, for example, the historians Lamb and Tarling in their book, *From Versailles to Pearl Harbor*, cite **Arthur Balfour**, the Foreign Secretary, who argued that:

> You cannot and no rational man would suggest that the League of Nations is constituted to deal with a world in chaos or with any part of a world which is in pure chaos.

As discussed in earlier sections of this revision guide, the most serious weakness of the League was the absence of the USA, following the US Senate's failure to ratify the Treaty of Versailles in 1919-20. The importance of this cannot be overstated since enforcement of League decisions without the financial and military resources of the USA would prove extremely difficult.

Also of great significance in explaining the League's failure in the 1930s, after qualified success in the 1920s, are the faulty assumptions that were made by the statesmen at Paris when the Covenant was drawn up.

It is worth quoting the historian **Graham Ross** at some length as he explains these flawed assumptions very clearly in his book ***The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System***:

> Collective security, however, involved certain assumptions which were not clearly articulated in the discussions of 1919. All member states must share an equal willingness to take action irrespective of their own involvement, or lack of it, in a particular dispute. Moreover, it was assumed that transgressors would be immediately and clearly identifiable. There would be little doubt about the rights and wrongs of the matter at issue. Transgressors would lack friends and allies and would therefore be especially susceptible to economic pressure. The efficacy of economic sanctions alone seems to have been rather taken for granted. In practice these various assumptions were to prove ill-founded, but this did not become clear until the 1930s.

The League of Nations did not face a really serious challenge in the 1920s but when it did in the 1930s, over Manchuria (1931-33) and Abyssinia (1935-36), the assumptions made in 1919 about how collective security would work were very much found wanting.

Q. What were the League's aims?

- To promote international co-operation, in pursuit of which the League enjoyed considerable success.
- To end war by promoting disarmament; by the preservation of its members from aggression; and by the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. The League proved mostly unsuccessful in pursuing this aim.

Q. How was the League structured?

1. The Council

- It met three or four times a year.
- It had several permanent members, originally five: France, Britain, Italy, Japan, the USA, **but**
  - The USA never joined
  - Italy and Japan withdrew
  - Germany and USSR came and went

There were also a number of rotating members: originally four but increased to six in 1922, nine in 1926, and eleven in 1936.

The Council would discuss a problem and then inform the Assembly of its decision.

2. **The Assembly**

It met once a year in September. There were 42 countries at its first meeting in 1920,; this grew to 55 members by 1924. 63 countries were members at one time or another. Each member state had one vote. The Assembly could discuss any problem, but was influenced by the Council's advice. Decisions were passed to the League's Secretariat.

3. **The Secretariat**

This was the League's civil service. The Secretary-General headed it. The Secretariat tried to include representatives of all member nations. It would announce decisions of the Council and the Assembly to the world.

4. **Departments**

(a) **International Court of Justice:**

This was established at The Hague in 1922 and was an international bench of eleven judges.

(b) **International Labour Organisation:**

It aimed to abolish social and economic injustice and was particularly successful under its French Director Albert Thomas.

5. **Commissions**

There were also a number of special commissions but the only two you need to be familiar with for Paper 1 are the **Mandates** and **Disarmament** Commissions, which are dealt with elsewhere in this revision guide.

Effects of the absence of major powers

Country	Dates of League membership
The USA	Never joined
Great Britain	The only country to remain throughout 1919-46
France	1919-40
Italy	1919-36; walked out in 1937 over Abyssinia
Japan	1919-33; withdrew in March 1933 after the Manchurian Crisis
Germany	1926-33; excluded at first, withdrew in October 1933 over disarmament
The USSR	1934-39; excluded until 1934, then expelled in 1939 over its attack on Finland

Britain and France were left to steer the League from 1920 and did so increasingly in opposite directions, Britain wishing to keep things flexible and judge each issue on its merits, France seeking security and wanting an international force to make obligations binding on member states. In the 1930s, Japan and Italy were intent on pursuing their own expansionist ambitions regardless of other countries.

The effects of the absence of great powers, notably the USA and the USSR, were graphically demonstrated in the Manchurian Crisis in 1931-33. In responding to Japan's occupation of Manchuria (which belonged to China), the League decided neither to impose economic nor military sanctions on Japan. The League's leading powers, Britain and France, reasoned that neither would be effective without the support of the USA, the greatest financial and military power in the region. Furthermore, Britain and France were worried that any attempt to impose sanctions on Japan might provoke a Japanese attack on their own colonies in the Far East.

Stanley Baldwin, the British minister, put this very clearly in February 1932:

> If you enforce an economic boycott you'll have war declared by Japan and she will seize Singapore and Hong Kong [both British possessions], and we can't, as we are placed, stop her. You'll get nothing out of Washington but words, big words, but only words.

Belatedly, Stalin decided to join the League of Nations in 1934. This was evidently motivated by his concern at Hitler's coming to power in Germany, which Stalin had not expected, and his beginning of German rearmament. During the mid-1930s, Stalin also signed mutual defence pacts with France and Czechoslovakia (1935) and sent military supplies and advisers to aid the Republican government in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). Stalin encouraged anti-Fascist coalitions of left-wing parties, including Communists, to come together in Popular Fronts; in France and Spain, Popular Front coalitions came to power in the mid-1930s.

The principle of collective security

Articles 10-17 of the Covenant enshrine the principle of collective security. Article 10 stated that:

> Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League. In case of any such aggression or of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.

Article 11 of the Covenant allowed the League of Nations to consider threats to peace.

Article 12 of the Covenant provided for settlement of international disputes by:

(i). Arbitration by a neutral power.

(ii). Individual settlement by the International Court of Justice.

(iii). Inquiry by the Council of the League.

Article 15 of the Covenant provided for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Article 16 of the Covenant outlined three methods of persuasion or *sanctions* open to the Council to recommend to the League's members:

> Members undertake to combine, by diplomatic pressure, suspension of trade, or if necessary, armed force, to prevent a resort to war in breach of the above agreements. It shall be the duty of the Council to recommend what steps members shall take in such circumstances, and it shall be the duty of members to support one another against any reprisals taken by the state against whom action is being taken.

However:

(i) There was no way of compelling a nation to submit to any method in the first place, nor of accepting any decision reached by the League.

(ii) Economic sanctions were only tried once (against Italy between October 1935 and July 1936 over Abyssinia) and were shown to be of very little value.

(iii) There was no League army and no police force. Nor were procedures and mechanisms for raising peacekeeping forces ever agreed on, in spite of the proposals put forward in 1924-25 in the shape of the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Geneva Protocol (see below).

(iv) The absence of several of the great powers (see above) undermined the League's effectiveness.

(v) It was closely linked with the Paris Peace Treaties of 1919-20 and therefore associated with their defects.

(vi) There were also weaknesses in the League's structures and procedures:

- The Assembly met only once a year in September.
- The Council met only three or four times a year.
- Decisions, both in the Council and the Assembly, had to be unanimous i.e. each country had the power of veto.
- No mechanism/procedures had been worked out for raising a peacekeeping force.
- Article 11 did not prevent parties to a dispute vetoing a resolution drawn up by the League; this proved a factor in the League's failure during the Manchurian crisis (1931-33) because Japan was able to block a League resolution in 1931. By contrast, Article 15 did rule out the use of a veto by any party involved in a dispute under consideration by the League.

Attempts to strengthen the League's machinery for peacekeeping: The Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance (1924); the Geneva Protocol (1924-25)

In 1924-25, the French took two initiatives to try to increase the League of Nations' capability as a peacekeeping organisation in the shape of the Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance (1924) and the Geneva Protocol (1924-25). In both cases, the proposals would have revised the League's procedures so that states within the League would, if they were attacked, be guaranteed military support from the rest of the League membership.

Both schemes foundered on Britain's reluctance to turn the League into what France wanted - a multi-national security pact, with a dedicated multi-national peacekeeping force - although Ramsay MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, did support the Geneva Protocol. However, the Geneva Protocol was rejected in 1925 by the new Conservative Government under Stanley Baldwin, and by the British Dominions (Australia etc), who would not agree to take part automatically in a European war.

Early attempts at peacekeeping (1920-25)

Despite the eventual failure of the League, it is important to remember that it did have some successes, both general and specific. The Assembly was the first genuine world forum. Co-operation on international organisations worked well. The League's Departments and Commissions were generally successful, particularly the International Labour Organisation. The League governed the Saar and Danzig well.

Early League successes

1. The Aaland Islands (1920-21)

The League resolved the Aaland Islands dispute between Sweden and Finland. The League awarded the islands to Finland. In spite of the fact that the majority of the inhabitants were Swedish, Sweden accepted this ruling.

2. Mosul (1923-24)

The League settled a dispute between Turkey and Iraq over Mosul. Turkey accepted that it should remain part of Iraq.

3. Greek-Bulgarian clash (1925)

The League helped avert a Balkan war between Greece and Bulgaria, fining Greece for a border attack on Bulgaria. In this case, the League Council acted very swiftly, coming into emergency session and passing a resolution calling for an immediate end to hostilities.

4. Plebiscites

The League managed four plebiscites successfully:

1919	Eupen and Malmédy	were awarded to Belgium
1920	Schleswig	was divided between Germany and Denmark
1920	Allenstein & Marienwerder	were largely awarded to Germany
1921	Upper Silesia	was partitioned between Poland and Germany. The League Council drew up a line for the border between Poland and Germany and provided for free movement across the border so that Upper Silesia's integrity as an economic unit would be preserved. Neither Germany, nor Poland, were satisfied with this decision but they did sign an agreement accepting it in May 1922.

The League of Nations, however, could be seen to have failed in the crises in the early 1920s detailed below. It should be noted that the League's jurisdiction in some of these crises was unclear because of the existence and actions of another body set up by the Paris Peace settlement: the Conference of Ambassadors.

The Conference of Ambassadors

The Conference of Ambassadors included the Allied powers (but not the USA) and was established to oversee the implementation of the borders laid down by the 1919-20 settlement.

Early League failures

1. Poland's seizure of Vilna (1920)

Fighting occurred in 1919-20 between Poland and Lithuania over Vilna, which had been Lithuania's capital in medieval times. As a result of the fighting, Vilna came under Polish control until 1922. The League of Nations, in 1922, tried to get Poland to agree to hand over Vilna to Lithuania but failed. In 1923, the Conference of Ambassadors awarded Vilna to Poland; a decision that Lithuania refused to recognise.

2. The Russo-Polish War (1920-21)

1920-21 saw war between Poland and Russia: Poland made substantial gains, which were recognised by Russia in the Treaty of Riga (1921). The League was unable to exert any influence over the bitter Russian-Polish fighting.

3. The Greek-Turkish War (1920-23)

Turkey went to war successfully with Greece in 1920-23 in a direct challenge to the Treaty of Sèvres. At one stage, it looked as if a military confrontation might occur between the advancing Turkish forces and an allied occupation force comprising Italian, French and British troops. However, in the end, all three military contingents were withdrawn. The League was unable to play any role in bringing this conflict to an end; the Allies instead decided to negotiate a revised settlement at Lausanne in 1923.

By the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), the Allies recognised that Turkey should regain Smyrna, Eastern Thrace, part of Armenia and some of the Aegean islands.

4. Lithuania's seizure of Memel (1923)

The Treaty of Versailles had taken away from Germany the East Prussian port of Memel, which had a mainly German-speaking population. At Versailles, Memel's final status had not been determined and the Allies administered it, anticipating that it would eventually be handed over to Lithuania. However, Lithuania, losing patience, occupied it in 1923. The Conference of Ambassadors attempted to negotiate an agreement with Lithuania concerning the position of Memel's German-speaking inhabitants and the question of Polish access to the port facilities. Lithuania rejected the Conference of Ambassadors' proposals and so the Conference handed over the matter to the League of Nations. The League Council did manage to get Lithuania to accept an agreement over Memel but Germany and Poland remained unhappy. So, in conclusion, Memel was a partial failure (or partial success, looking at it positively!) for the League.

5. The Corfu Incident (1923)

Italian troops occupied Corfu after the murder of an Italian general by Greek bandits. Mussolini sought to bully Greece into paying compensation to Italy. It is possible that Mussolini had planned to take Corfu permanently but he withdrew after the League of Nations ordered Greece to pay Italy 50 million lire compensation.

Initially the League of Nations had ruled that Italy should evacuate Corfu, pending a League inquiry into the dispute. However, the Conference of Ambassadors (a body comprising the leading European powers, set up to oversee the implementation of the borders laid down by the 1919-20 settlement) effectively overruled the League and reversed its decision. This was not a clear-cut defeat for the League because the Conference of Ambassadors did have a direct interest in the Corfu Incident and the Italian officers killed had been working under its jurisdiction.

The Ruhr Crisis (1923)

As noted in the section on the Treaty of Versailles and its impact, reparations proved one of the most contentious of all the issues emanating from the Paris peace settlement. There were several international conferences to discuss the issue in 1920-21. At the Spa Conference, in July 1920, agreement was reached on the level of coal to be delivered by Germany to the Allies. Twice, in 1920 and 1921, the Germans defaulted on payments and France sent in troops to occupy several towns in the Ruhr. On both occasions, French intervention had received reluctant approval from Britain.

The Reparations Commission, in April 1921, finally arrived at a total figure for reparations of £6,600 million. The schedule for payments was communicated to Germany in May 1921, including a requirement that Germany pay £50 million immediately. At first, Germany delivered what was demanded of it but in December the German government asked for a postponement of payments due in January and February 1922. The British looked favourably upon this appeal; the French did not. The Reparations Commission did agree to grant a limited moratorium on Germany's payments, however, in December 1922, it ruled that Germany had failed to keep to the agreed schedule of timber deliveries; consequently, Raymond Poincaré decided to send 60,000 French (and Belgian)

troops into the Ruhr in January 1923. The Ruhr produced 80% of Germany's steel and 70% of its coal.

The French and Belgians occupy the Ruhr

As the British historian, **Ruth Henig**, explains, French motives were not limited to simply extracting what was due to them:

> The French not only hoped to be able to collect the reparations at gunpoint but also wanted to try to fan the flames of Rhineland separatism, to see if there was any possibility of working towards the achievement of an independent Rhineland.

The German chancellor, Cuno, suspended all reparations payments and ordered workers in the Ruhr to engage in passive resistance, to go on strike. German workers sabotaged French attempts to transport raw materials back to France and about 150 were killed in clashes with French and Belgian soldiers. Both Britain and the USA condemned France's actions.

Germany's Hyper-inflation

Inflation had been a serious problem in Germany since the outbreak of the First World War. The value of the mark had declined greatly by 1919 but it was in 1922/1923 that prices rose very steeply before the situation got totally out of control as a result of the Ruhr occupation and the German government's response to it. The German governments of the period 1919-23 were too inclined to print more paper money to finance the cost of war pensions and reparations. In 1923 nearly 2000 printing presses were working round the clock printing paper money. The percentage of Germans unemployed rose from 2% to 23%.

Gustav Stresemann, leader of the DVP (German People's Party), replaced Wilhelm Cuno as chancellor in August 1923; Stresemann led a 'Grand Coalition' comprising the DVP, SPD (Social Democrats), Centre and DDP (German Democratic Party). Stresemann brought in the banker Hjalmar Schacht to oversee the currency crisis. Stresemann took the controversial decision to order the workers in the Ruhr to co-operate with the French and he resumed reparations payments. Schacht introduced a new currency, the Rentenmark, to replace the old mark (one rentenmark was exchanged for 10,000,000,000,000 old marks). The Finance Minister, Hans Luther, tried to balance the budget by cutting government spending; this included sacking 900,000 public employees. In 1924 the Rentenmark was replaced by the Reichsmark (which continued until 1945).

Stresemann played an important role in negotiating the Dawes Plan (1924), which led to the provision of massive American loans to Germany and to France's withdrawal from the Ruhr (see below).

Germany and France look to negotiate

Germany and France both suffered from the deadlock over reparations and so sought a way out through negotiations. Germany was suffering from the burden of reparations and international isolation. France too was suffering from her international isolation, which increased because of Raymond Poincaré's unreasonableness. Britain was openly hostile towards the French occupation of the Ruhr. In October 1923, Britain suggested to the USA that a committee of experts

should be established to consider the whole issue of reparations. President Coolidge agreed and even Poincaré was prepared to go along with the proposed committee; consequently a committee, under the American Charles Dawes, met in Paris between January and April 1924.

Poincaré's agreement to the creation of a reparations committee reflected the fact that large sections of the French public were alarmed by France's diplomatic isolation. Also the French economy was threatened by the burdens of the Ruhr occupation, which brought no profits. Poincaré was replaced by Herriot as French Prime Minister and Briand as Foreign Minister in a new government in May.

The Dawes Plan, August 1924

The Dawes Plan was accepted at the London Conference (July-August 1924).

1. Germany was to receive an initial loan of $200 million from the USA and other foreign countries.

2. The Dawes Plan did not alter the total amount of reparations to be paid by Germany, but Germany's reparation payments were rescheduled; starting at 1 billion (1000 million) gold marks in the first year, increasing to 2.5 billion (2500 million) from the fifth year onwards.

3. In order to ensure that Germany paid her instalments of reparations, specific German taxes and bonds were identified and earmarked for that purpose.

4. A Reparations Agency was established to supervise the new arrangements.

5. The French promised Germany that they would evacuate the Ruhr within a year.

Gustav Stresemann and *'Fulfilment'*

Gustav Stresemann, leader of the German People's Party, wanted to see Germany make the best possible recovery from her humiliation in 1918, even if that meant first accepting the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, and then having them changed by international consent. After a brief spell as Chancellor in 1923, he became Foreign Minister until his death in 1929. His policy was unpopular with the Nationalists but he made Germany accepted again diplomatically and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926 jointly with Aristide Briand, the French Foreign Minister, and Austen Chamberlain, the British Foreign Secretary.

Locarno and the 'Locarno Spring' (1925)

Following the Ruhr Crisis of 1923 and the Dawes Plan of 1924, Gustav Stresemann, the German Foreign Minister, in January-February 1925, put out feelers to both Britain and France with proposals for a security pact. Stresemann was intent on gaining substantial revisions of the Versailles Treaty, including almost certainly changes to Germany's border with Poland, but, unlike many German nationalists, he believed that the best way to achieve them was by means of improving Germany's relations with Britain and France. Although Stresemann was careful to maintain Germany's treaty with the USSR, agreed at Rapallo in 1922, he saw it as having only limited economic and military value to Germany.

Stresemann saw a security pact with Britain and France as the way to unlock further concessions on the issues of reparations, and, the early withdrawal of both the Allied Control Commission (supervising the military restrictions laid down by Versailles) and of the Allied occupation forces in the Rhineland (due to remain until 1935).

It took until September 1925 for a meeting of Britain, France, Italy, Germany and Belgium to be held at Locarno in Italy; a treaty was formally signed in London in December 1925. The agreements reached at Locarno were much more substantial concerning western Europe than were those affecting eastern Europe. This was as a result of Germany's total opposition to any guarantee of its eastern borders (i.e. with Poland and Czechoslovakia) and of Britain's refusal to commit itself militarily to upholding the eastern settlement created in 1919.

Q. What were the terms of the Locarno Treaties?

1. Belgium, France and Germany accepted the western borders of Germany, including the demilitarised zone in the Rhineland, as laid down by the Versailles Treaty.

2. Britain and Italy acted as guarantors of the Franco-German-Belgian borders in the west; 'flagrant' breaches of the treaty, by either France, or Belgium or Germany, would require Britain and Italy to intervene.

3. 'Alleged' breaches of the Franco-German-Belgian borders in the west were to be referred to the League of Nations.

4. Germany would not confirm its acceptance of its Eastern frontiers, but agreed to sign arbitration treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia, committing itself to settle disputes with her eastern neighbours peacefully. There was no mechanism of guarantors for the eastern part of the Locarno Treaties; Locarno obliged none of the western powers to intervene in the event of the eastern settlement being violated.

5. In a bid to reassure Czechoslovakia and Poland, France renewed its treaties with them individually after the Locarno Conference.

6. It was agreed that Germany should enter the League of Nations (which it did, with a permanent seat on the Council, in September 1926).

Q. What were the results of the Locarno treaties?

1. The Locarno Pact did little more than confirm the Treaty of Versailles. The 'guarantee' provided by Britain and Italy remained very ill defined and it was not made clear what would constitute a 'flagrant' breach of the treaty. Britain remained opposed to giving any binding or full commitment to provide France with military support in the event of a German attack on her. France, without such an undertaking from Britain, continued to feel deeply insecure.

   The historian **Ruth Henig** explains this ongoing Anglo-French friction:

   > From the French point of view, therefore, Locarno was a worrying agreement. It clearly revealed Britain's policy of limited liability for European peace. It marked the largest contribution to French security which the British government was willing to make, and the least the French felt able to accept.

2. Germany was treated as an equal again, rather than as the 'criminal' nation it was made to feel like at Versailles in 1919.

3. Locarno appeared to promise a period of international co-operation, apparently confirmed by the evacuation of part of the Rhineland by the Allies in January 1926 and the ending of the Allied Control Commission in 1927.

   In September 1926, there briefly appeared to be the prospect of a further and fuller settlement of Franco-German differences when Stresemann met Briand at Thoiry. Stresemann proposed that Germany would pay France and Belgium for the return of Eupen, Malmedy and the Saar and also sought the early withdrawal of Allied troops from the Rhineland. Briand was prepared to consider these proposals but they met with fierce opposition from within both the French and German cabinets and were therefore dropped.

4. Stresemann signed a new treaty with the USSR in April 1926: the Treaty of Berlin. Stresemann saw this as necessary in order to reassure the USSR following his agreements with the West at Locarno. The USSR and Germany promised each other that they would remain neutral in the event of either being attacked by a third power.

5. The three foreign ministers - Gustav Stresemann, Aristide Briand and Austen Chamberlain - were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1926. This award reflects the view among many contemporaries that the Locarno Pact signalled the start of a new era of international peace and co-operation.

   However, as **Margaret Lamb** and **Nicholas Tarling** point out:

   > With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that these hopes were not fulfilled and that there was no lasting rapprochement amongst the powers...Despite their goodwill and desire to negotiate compromise settlements, the three statesmen themselves had incompatible policy objectives.

The historian Anthony Adamthwaite observes that by the end of the 1920s the 'spirit of Locarno (as contemporaries called it) had evaporated and that it had meant different things to the British, French and German foreign ministers. Adamthwaite quotes the French diplomat, René Massigli's witticism to illustrate his point:

Il ya trois choses, le Locarno spirit, l'esprit de Locarno, et le Locarnogeist

Austen Chamberlain had sought to enhance France's sense of security without committing Britain to military intervention in Europe (except in very vague terms), whilst conciliating Germany.

Aristide Briand remained preoccupied with increasing security for France against a German attack and he left Locarno without the reassurances he wanted from Britain.

Gustav Stresemann aimed at improving relations with Britain and France as a way to achieving major revisions of Versailles; in this he had limited success.

The 'Spirit of Locarno' appeared to be confirmed by further international agreements in 1928-29.

The Pact of Paris (better known as *The Kellogg-Briand Pact*): 1928

In the spring of 1927, Aristide Briand, the French Foreign Minister, proposed a treaty with the USA outlawing war between France and the USA. Clearly, the likelihood of such a conflict was terribly remote; Briand hoped that such a treaty might become the first step towards reviving the prospect of an American-French military alliance, which France had been promised by President Wilson back in 1919 but which had never materialised.

President Calvin Coolidge and his Secretary of State, Frank Kellogg, saw through Briand's ploy and countered his proposal with a suggestion that all countries be invited to sign a pact in which they renounced war. This resulted in 15 countries signing the Pact of Paris, or what became popularly known as the Kellogg-Briand Pact, in Paris, in August 1928. Under the terms of the pact, the signatories agreed to 'renounce war as an instrument of national policy'; reserving the right to defend themselves against external aggression.

The Kellogg-Briand Pact, however, did not provide any machinery to enforce its terms, nor did it define aggression. None the less, by 1933, 65 countries, including the USSR, had signed the Pact and many people saw it at the time as a significant achievement. However, signing the Kellogg-Briand Pact did not prevent Japan, Italy or Germany all launching wars in the 1930s, in flagrant violation of the pact's terms.

The historian **Hugh Brogan**, in his book, ***The Penguin History of the United States***, roundly dismisses the Kellogg-Briand Pact in the following terms:

> This suggestion [the Kellogg-Briand Pact] was immensely popular with all the fools who thought that peace could be maintained without effort or expense, and there were many such in every nation.

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The Young Plan (1929)

In September 1928, following private discussions at a meeting of the League of Nations Assembly, it was announced that a new plan would be drawn up to replace the Dawes Plan (1924). A committee of financial experts, chaired by the US businessman, Owen Young, met in Paris from February 1929 and put forward its report in June 1929. This was then discussed at the Hague Conference in August 1929.

Q. What were the terms of the Young Plan?

1. The original total figure for reparations, fixed in 1921, had been 132 billion (132,000 million) gold marks. The Young Plan reduced this to 121 billion (121,000 million) gold marks.

2. Germany was to pay an annual sum until 1988.

3. Germany was initially to pay 1.7 billion (1700 million) marks each year, increasing, gradually, to 2.4 billion (2400 million) marks by 1966. Germany's payments in the first 10 years would be lower than under the schedule laid down by the Dawes Plan.

4. The Reparations Agency was abolished. Instead a new Bank for International Settlements in Switzerland would supervise reparations payments.

5. Another foreign loan to Germany of $300 million was agreed.

6. It was agreed that all Allied troops were to be withdrawn from the Rhineland by June 1930. In fact, Britain withdrew all of its troops before the end of 1929.

The German government accepted the Young Plan in August 1929, in spite of reservations. Gustav Stresemann had hoped for a better deal for Germany, but was won over by the agreement by the Allies to end their occupation of the Rhineland five years ahead of the timescale laid down by the Versailles Treaty.

In Germany, Alfred Hugenberg's Nationalist Party (DNVP) campaigned alongside Hitler's Nazi Party in opposition to the Young Plan; they argued that Germany was not guilty for starting the First World War and therefore should not pay reparations at all. The Reichstag eventually approved the Young Plan in March 1930.

Within a couple of months of the Hague Conference's acceptance of the Young Plan, the Wall Street Crash occurred (October 1929) and the onset of the Great Depression meant that the Young Plan never really got off the ground.

The Hoover Moratorium (1931) and Lausanne Conference (1932)

In 1931, a serious banking crisis occurred in Europe, with the collapse of a number of important banks such as the Austrian Credit-Anstalt. President Hoover responded by proposing, in June 1931, a one-year moratorium (freeze) on all war debt and reparation payments. French opposition delayed international acceptance of the proposed Hoover Moratorium; the French suspected that if reparation payments were suspended, they were unlikely to recommence at the end of 1932.

French suspicions were to be proved correct because reparations were effectively abandoned in 1932 as a result of the Lausanne Conference (June-July 1932). At Lausanne, it was decided to suspend reparation repayments for 3 years and to reduce Germany's reparations bill to a final payment of just 3 billion (3000 million) marks, only 2% of the original 1921 figure. When Hitler came to power in 1933, he announced that Germany would pay no more in reparations.

The Great Depression and threats to international peace and collective security

The most important single factor in the collapse of the 'Spirit of Locarno' in the late 1920s was the impact of the Wall Street Crash (October 1929) and the ensuing Great Depression. The Great Depression dislocated the international economic system and created huge unemployment and social distress. In the USA, 25% of the labour force was unemployed by 1933; in Germany, the unofficial figure for unemployment in 1932 has been put at 8 million by the historian Richard Overy. One consequence of this was that the Great Depression undermined confidence both in the capitalist system and in parliamentary democracy. The effects of the Great Depression were felt around the world but two of the most badly hit economies were those of Germany and Japan and these two countries went on to pose the greatest threats to the international order.

Richard Overy, in his book, ***The Inter-War Crisis***, outlines very clearly the impact of the Great Depression on international relations, arguing that:

> The economic crisis...did more than anything else to sour relations between the major states and to bring to an end the era of internationalist collaboration. Policies of economic selfishness revived old grievances and created new ones. Resentments that had simmered beneath the surface in the 1920s burst into the open with a fresh urgency. The social consequences of the slump pushed populations in the weaker economies towards political extremism and violent national self-assertion.

The Wall Street Crash (October 1929)

The crash on the New York Stock Exchange started on 29 October 1929; 16 million shares were sold at much reduced prices. Share prices continued to fall until July 1933, by which time they were at a level of only 15% of their value in October 1929. In the process, the value of shares had fallen by $74 billion. The Wall Street Crash was only one cause of the Great Depression but this is not the place to go in to its wider causes such as the financial instability of many European countries and the fall in world agricultural prices. The Great Depression was different from the periodic recessions that occur in the world business cycle, in that it lasted much longer and economic output fell much more sharply. In 1931-33, a banking crisis hit the USA and many parts of Europe as thousands of banks collapsed.

Protectionism

Many governments reacted to the Great Depression by trying to protect their own industries from foreign competition by means of raising tariff barriers against imported goods. In 1930, the USA's Hawley-Smoot Tariff greatly restricted foreign imports but, in the process, sparked off a tariff 'war' with other countries, for example, in 1932 Britain and its imperial partners set up the Imperial Preference System which discriminated in favour of members of the Empire but discriminated against goods from outside the Empire. World trade fell by about two-thirds in the period 1929-32 and even by 1938 it was still only 40% of what it had been in 1929.

The impact of the Great Depression on Germany

In the case of Germany, its economic recovery in the mid-1920s was very fragile and highly dependent on the continuation of US loans. The Great Depression was the key factor in the collapse of the Weimar Republic and led to the rise of Hitler, with his attendant aggressive foreign policy. The year before the advent of the Great Depression, the Nazis polled under 3% of the votes in the 1928 Reichstag elections; in 1930, as unemployment soared in Germany, the Nazis gained 17% of the seats in the German parliament and became the second biggest party. With unemployment peaking at 6 million in 1932, the Nazis became the largest party in the Reichstag with 37% of the seats; President Hindenburg therefore appointed Hitler chancellor in January 1933. Within months Hitler had established a single party state and, by 1935, was rapidly rearming German.

Under Hitler, Germany quickly revived as the most powerful industrial and military power in Europe; with an aggressive dictator in charge, driven by a racial vision of winning *Lebensraum* ('living-space') in the East for the 'master-race', both the Paris peace settlement and the international order were to be challenged and disrupted from the mid-1930s onwards.

Note about Hitler's aggression (to 1936)
This does not constitute a named bullet point on the IBO's syllabus for 'Peacemaking, Peacekeeping – International Relations 1918-36' but forms a vital part of the context for other developments which are bullet-pointed on the Paper 1 syllabus, such as the Abyssinian Crisis, and clearly forms a major part of this particular section: 'Threats to international peace and collective security'.

Hitler's Foreign Policy Aims

Foreign policy was of primary importance to Hitler. His main priority from 1934, once he had established his dictatorship, was to rearm Germany. Revising the Versailles Treaty was for Hitler not the ultimate goal but a means towards the larger aim of winning lebensraum; breaking the restrictions that Versailles had imposed on Germany's armed forces was a prerequisite for expansion. Hitler's racist ideas meant that he was committed to the creation of a Greater German Reich, incorporating all German-speakers. However, he wanted to go much further than that; he sought *lebensraum* for the German 'master race' and also to seize areas which had the resources that Germany needed (*Grosswirtschaftsraum*: 'Greater Economic space'). Hitler envisaged a Germany that would include the whole of Eastern Europe and the western part of the USSR. The native peoples of the area, mainly Slavs and regarded by the Nazis as sub-human, would work for the Germans as slaves.

Hitler's early challenges to the Paris peace settlement and international order

Initially Hitler had to proceed cautiously because, in 1933, Germany's armed forces were considerably weaker than those of its neighbours such as France and Poland. However, from 1936 onwards, the pace of Hitler's foreign policy accelerated sharply, disrupting international relations in the process.

None the less, as early as 1933, Hitler withdrew Germany from the League of Nations and from the League's Disarmament Conference, using France's refusal to allow German rearmament as an excuse. Hitler sought to win British support by claiming that he was prepared to accept a limit of 200,000 for the German Army. By this time many British politicians were arguing that the Versailles Treaty had been too harsh and that revisions should be made.

It is possible, but not proven, that Hitler was behind the attempt in July 1934 by Austrian Nazis to seize power in Vienna in order to achieve the Anschluss (union with Germany), which had been forbidden by both the Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of St Germain. In their abortive coup, the Austrian Nazis murdered the Austrian Chancellor, Engelbert Dollfuss. The putsch failed and Kurt Schuschnigg, an opponent of the Nazis, became chancellor. The incident alarmed Mussolini, who had had close relations with Dollfuss, so much so that he mobilised Italian troops at the Brenner Pass, on the Austro-Italian border. Most contemporaries believed that Hitler was behind the attempted Austrian Nazi putsch but historians are divided over this question.

Revisions of the Versailles Treaty (1935-36):

1. Reunion with the Saar (January 1935)

In January, the inhabitants of the Saar, run by the League of Nations since 1920, voted by a vast majority in favour of reunion with Germany. This was in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles and the plebiscite was administered by the League of Nations.

2. Reintroduction of conscription and Hitler's announcement of rearmament (March 1935)

Hitler announced that he was reintroducing military conscription, intended to create an army of 550,000 men and that Germany had already begun to build, in breach of Versailles, an air force. These announcements alarmed Britain, France and Italy, who consequently came together in the short-lived Stresa Front (April 1935), under which they pledged co-operation against further violations of the 1919 treaties. Mussolini was concerned about Hitler's declared aim of achieving the *Anschluss* because Italy had gained the South Tyrol, a German-speaking area, in the 1919 settlement, and Mussolini feared that if Hitler took over Austria, he would then demand the South Tyrol. Furthermore, if Germany took Austria, Mussolini suspected that Hitler might look to expand into the Balkans where Mussolini had his own ambitions.

3. The Anglo-German Naval Convention (June 1935)

Britain angered France and Italy by signing the Anglo-German Naval Convention in June 1935, allowing Germany to have a navy with a tonnage of 35% that of Britain's. Effectively, Britain was unilaterally sanctioning a breach of the military restrictions laid down by the Treaty of Versailles, since a German navy 35% the size of Britain's would far exceed the limitations imposed on Germany in 1919.

4. Re-militarising the Rhineland (March 1936)

Hitler generally proved adept at reading how his opponents were likely to respond. Encouraged by the collapse of the Stresa Front (because of the Anglo-German Naval Convention and the Abyssinian Crisis), and by the international community's preoccupation with the Abyssinian crisis, he felt confident enough to remilitarize the Rhineland, a breach of both the Versailles Treaty and the Locarno Pact (1925). Although the League of Nations condemned this action, France and Britain did nothing about it. Hitler's generals were astonished; they had advised against the move, believing it would provoke a war with the much larger French Army.

The impact of the Great Depression on Japan

Japan had been an expansionist power since the late 19th century, taking advantage of China's weakness to extract concessions and take territory from it – notably, Taiwan and, following their victory over Russia in 1905, Korea. Japan had also won important economic concessions in Manchuria from China.

Up until 1931, however, Japan had largely co-operated with the West, for example, Japan had signed the Washington Naval Treaty in 1922, accepting a position of naval inferiority compared to Britain and the USA. In addition, Japan had played a significant role in the League of Nations, as a permanent member of the Council. Japan had also benefitted from close economic and financial ties with the USA and the European powers. This was also true of Japan's relations with China in the 1920s; Baron Shidehara, Japan's foreign minister for much of the period 1924-31, had favoured a conciliatory policy towards China, which was the destination of 25% of Japanese exports in the 1920s.

The Wall St. Crash created an unprecedented economic crisis in Japan, which led to a dramatic change in Japanese foreign policy, and, to an increasingly authoritarian style of politics that involved the undermining of Japan's parliamentary system and the growing political influence of Japan's armed forces.

By 1932, the price of silk fell to 20% of its 1923 figure. Half of Japan's farmers were dependent on silk; peasants and factory workers blamed the government. Many Japanese, particularly in the armed forces, turned their back on co-operation with the West and with China, and saw imperialist aggression as a way out of Japan's economic difficulties. Starting with the invasion of Manchuria in 1931, Japan embarked on an aggressive foreign policy which challenged the West and disrupted the international order. This course was to lead Japan in to the full-scale invasion of China in 1937, the occupation of Indo-China in 1940 and the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, provoking the USA's entry in to the Second World War.

***For a detailed analysis of Japan's invasion of Manchuria, see the section below on the* Manchuria Incident, 1931-33**

The impact of the Great Depression on Italy

Mussolini during the 1920s, with the exception of his occupation of Corfu in 1923, followed a relatively peaceful and restrained policy because much of his attention was focused on extending and then consolidating his political position within Italy. Furthermore, much of the Italian army was tied up in suppressing rebellion in Libya. However, the Wall Street Crash in America (1929) hit Italy, like the rest of Europe, hard. Unemployment in Italy rose to over 2 million by 1933 and living standards for most ordinary Italians fell. The government obliged industrial workers to accept wage cuts in 1930 and 1934, whilst agricultural wages dropped by between 20 to 40% during the 1930s.

The growing economic difficulties facing Italy appears to have been one of the factors that account for Mussolini's increasingly aggressive foreign policy in the 1930s. This saw Mussolini invade Abyssinia in 1935-36, in part, as an attempt to revive support for his regime among Italians. The Abyssinian invasion led to Italy's withdrawal from the League of Nations and to Mussolini reorienting his diplomatic ties, breaking his links with Britain and France and seeking ever closer relations with Hitler's Germany. Ultimately Mussolini signed a military alliance with Germany – the so-called Pact of Steel – in May 1939. Mussolini's support from 1936 onwards was one factor that gave Hitler the growing confidence to challenge Britain and France and revise the Versailles Treaty's territorial settlement in the East.

***For a detailed assessment of the Abyssinian invasion, see the section:* 'Abyssinia 1935-36'**

The impact of the Great Depression on Britain and France

Britain's policy of *Appeasement*

The Great Depression was one factor that contributed to the policy of appeasement followed by the British government in the 1930s. I have already explained, in previous sections of this revision guide, that during the 1920s the British Government had decided that some of the Versailles Treaty's restrictions on Germany were unreasonably harsh. Once Hitler came to power in 1933, this conviction led Britain to pursue a policy of making concessions to Hitler in the hope that this would induce Hitler to behave more reasonably and thus maintain peace in Europe. This assumption was the basis of British foreign policy towards Germany until March 1939, when Hitler occupied the non-German speaking parts of Czechoslovakia, and that policy came to be known as Appeasement.

There are several links between the Great Depression and appeasement:

1. The Great Depression, as seen above, had given rise to Hitler's regime in Germany and made the foreign policies of Japan and Italy more aggressive; hence, Britain was faced with the prospect of a variety of challenges to its interests and to the international order. Appeasement was Britain's response: thereby the British government hoped to avoid a war with either Hitler or Mussolini whilst the Japanese appeared to pose a growing menace to British interests and possessions in the Far East.

2. The British government was preoccupied with resolving the economic problems caused by the Wall Street Crash. This was one reason why rearmament was delayed until 1934.

3. The British government was reluctant (as was France) to confront Germany because they could not count on support from the USA, which was following an isolationist foreign policy during the 1930s. The USA had been isolationist in the 1920s but the Great Depression strengthened this attitude **(see below 'The impact of the Great Depression on the USA').**

Of course, the Great Depression was only one element in shaping British foreign policy in the 1930s. British politicians were concerned about the possibility of being dragged into a European conflict at a time that there was growing unrest in several parts of its Empire, for example in India and in its mandate of Palestine. Equally important in accounting for appeasement is the strong current of pacifism evident in Britain in the 1930s; in 1935, a Peace Pledge Union was organised which staged a ballot in which 9 million people voted to reject war. This mood was echoed in France when crowds numbering a million demonstrated in May 1936 in favour of peace.

France's position in the 1930s

Just as with Britain, the impact of the Great Depression on France made its leaders much less inclined to stand up to Hitler's violations of the Versailles Treaty in the mid and late 1930s. French preoccupation with bringing down unemployment and reviving economic output - French steel production, even in 1938, was still one-third below what it had been in 1928 - took priority over rearmament; France only started rearming seriously in 1936.

The French government felt too weak to prevent Hitler breaking the Versailles Treaty unless Britain took joint action alongside France. British politicians, on the other hand, were more favourably disposed towards German revisions of the treaty as long as this was done through negotiation. So in practice, in spite of the threat posed to French security by Hitler's rearmament and other treaty violations, France did very little to prevent Hitler breaking the Versailles Treaty until it declared war on Hitler in September 1939.

There were other factors that explain France's passive attitude towards Hitler's aggressive foreign policy in the 1930s, such as the fact that it was politically very divided in the 1930s; many on the Right in France were more concerned about the French Communist Party and the threat of Soviet expansion than about Hitler. Memories of the horrific slaughter of the First World War meant that many people both in France and Britain were committed to the prevention of another war. This sentiment was reinforced by knowledge of the effects of bombing on civilians during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39).

The impact of the Great Depression on US Foreign Policy: *'The business of America is business'*

The USA had withdrawn into isolationism in the 1920s following the Senate's failure to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. The USA consequently never joined the League of Nations and Woodrow Wilson was succeeded by a trio of Republican presidents who remained wary of entangling the USA in diplomatic or military agreements. The US administrations of the 1920s concentrated their attention on economic growth; an attitude famously summed up in the oft-quoted (in fact slightly misquoted!) words of President Calvin Coolidge in 1925:

'The business of America is business'

(Although, in fact, Coolidge actually said, *'The chief business of the American people is business'*).

None the less, US 'isolationism' in the 1920s had been far from total, nor could it be; the USA had involved itself in trying to resolve the crisis caused by reparations, lending Germany vast sums of money under the Dawes and Young Plans, and had helped sponsor the Kellogg-Briand Pact (1928) by which over 60 countries renounced the use of war except in self-defence. In addition, the USA played a key role in the naval disarmament conferences held in Washington (1921-22) and London (1930; 1935-36).

The effect of the Great Depression was to lead US politicians to withdraw even further from international collaboration and to put US economic interests before all else. In July 1933, President Roosevelt blocked agreement at the World Economic Conference in London, by refusing to take joint action to stabilise currency exchange rates.

The USA's reluctance to confront Japanese aggression

The USA's drift into isolationism was reflected by its failure to intervene when Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931, although Secretary of State Stimpson favoured economic sanctions against Japan (he was overruled by President Hoover) and it was only in 1941 that the USA was prepared to take a strong stand against escalating Japanese aggression in the Far East, when it embargoed oil exports to Japan.

In 1935 the US Senate passed a provisional Neutrality Act and this was followed in 1937 by a full Neutrality Act, which committed the US government to neutrality in the event of future wars between foreign countries. The USA's reluctance to involve itself in international crises in the 1930s in part explains the weak stance taken by Britain and France in dealing with acts of aggression by Germany, Italy and Japan.

The Arms Race

Although Britain and France had failed to rearm prior to the mid-1930s, growing anxiety about the threats posed by Germany, Italy and Japan led them to join in what became an international arms race like that seen in Europe before the First World War.

- Soviet rearmament started in earnest under Stalin in 1930 and, by 1936, the USSR had built nearly 16,000 planes and just under 19,000 tanks; rearmament accelerated even more rapidly from 1937 onwards under Stalin's Third Five-Year Plan.
- Britain began serious rearmament in 1934, with a programme of military spending amounting to £1,500 million in the period up to 1938.
- France commenced large-scale rearmament in 1936.
- Hitler accelerated his rearmament of Germany sharply in 1936, with his Four Year Plan, designed to make Germany ready for war by 1940.
- Both Japan and Italy substantially increased their military spending in 1938.

Richard Overy calculates that, in total, military expenditure rose more than six-fold in the period 1934-39 in Germany, Britain and Japan; in the USSR, eight-fold; and, in France, ten-fold.

Richard Overy, in his book, ***The Inter-War Crisis***, observes that:

> Though rearmament did not directly cause the war in 1939, the huge military build up in a matter of a few years created a climate of uncertainty and crisis, which reduced the very security that greater military force was supposed to bring.

Stalin's search for security in the 1930s

Faced by growing threats to the USSR, at a time when it was still far behind the West in terms of industrialisation, Stalin sought to increase Soviet security by ending the USSR's diplomatic isolation. For much of the 1930s, Stalin looked to the West for 'collective security' against the threat posed by Hitler but eventually in 1939 Stalin did a complete about-turn and signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact.

Up until 1938, was Stalin looking to play off the western democracies against Germany In the period up to 1939, Maxim Litvinov was the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs and he favoured closer links with the West.

Stalin looks to the West

1934	The USSR was admitted to the League of Nations, with a permanent seat on the League's Council. The USSR signed a Non-Aggression Pact with the Baltic States
1935	The USSR signed pacts with France and Czechoslovakia, committing itself to defend the latter against attack. However, the French government never ratified this agreement. At the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, Stalin's new strategy of organising an Anti-Fascist Popular Front was announced. The Popular Front involved encouraging an alliance of Communists and other left-wing parties throughout Europe to fight against Fascism. Prior to this, Comintern had worked to undermine other socialist parties, notably in Germany. In 1936-38 a Popular Front government was in power in France and in 1936-39 Spain was governed by a Popular Front coalition.
1936	Stalin sent aid to the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). Stalin was concerned by German and Italian intervention on General Franco's side, so from October 1936 USSR provided the Republicans with tanks and planes and military advisers. Franco's Nationalists won in 1939.

Manchuria Incident, 1931-33

Prior to 1931, as discussed above, the Japanese government had largely pursued a conciliatory policy towards the USA, the European powers and China.

As the historian **CJ Bartlett** puts it:

> The Washington settlement of 1921-22 had worked fairly well in the 1920s, and superficially it appeared to be reaffirmed and even extended at the London Naval Conference in 1930. From 1921 the majority of the Japanese ruling elite, with varying degrees of enthusiasm, had attempted to work broadly within Anglo-Saxon conceptions of world order.

The growth of militarism in Japan

Following the devastating impact of the Great Depression on the Japanese economy, with unemployment reaching 2.6 million in 1930 and exports having fallen by almost 50% in the period 1929-31, many Japanese nationalists, particularly within the armed forces, saw Manchuria as a tempting prize because it was a vast region, rich in mineral resources, and Japan already had economic concessions there and troops stationed in Manchuria.

Since the 1904-5 Russo-Japanese War, Japan had control of Korea (which bordered Manchuria) and annexed it in 1910. By the late 1920s Japan controlled the tip of the Liaodong Peninsula on the southern coast of Manchuria and the South Manchurian Railway. The Japanese became worried that the Nationalist government of China, led by Chiang Kai-shek, might try to end their concessions in Manchuria because the Nationalists were demanding an end to all foreign concessions in China. Furthermore, the warlord running Manchuria, Zhang Xueliang, wanted to expel the Japanese from the region.

The Mukden Incident (September 1931)

In September 1931 the Japanese army in Manchuria, known as the Kwantung Army, staged the *Mukden Incident*, blowing up part of the South Manchurian Railway whilst blaming it on the Chinese. They then occupied much of Manchuria. The fighting escalated briefly in January 1932 when skirmishes broke out in Shanghai between Chinese troops and Japanese marines who were protecting Japanese citizens and property in the international quarter. The Japanese subjected Shanghai to aerial bombing.

The takeover of Manchuria was a decision taken by Kwantung army officers stationed in Manchuria, with the backing of some senior military figures in Tokyo; the Japanese government, however, did not authorise it. The army ignored the Japanese government's protests and came to exert an increasing influence over the government. In May 1932, nationalist officers assassinated Prime Minister Inukai who had been trying to reach a solution to the Manchurian crisis that would leave China with some semblance of sovereignty over Manchuria. The army contained a variety of factions and it was the 'Imperial Way' faction that was behind the Manchurian Incident; however, the Imperial Way faction was eventually brought under control in 1936, after an attempted military coup, by the 'Control Faction' of more senior, less radical officers.

China's response to the Japanese occupation

The Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek did not put up much resistance to the Japanese takeover; Chiang Kai-shek ordered Zhang Xueliang, the Chinese general in command in Manchuria, to withdraw his forces from Manchuria and Chiang eventually was prepared to sign a truce with the Japanese in May 1933. This passive response on Chiang's part was because Chiang's first priority was to defeat his internal enemy, the Chinese Communist Party, and unify the country.

The League's response

The League responded slowly and ineffectually to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria. This was partly because the situation in Manchuria was so complex given the weak and unstable nature of China since the 1911 Revolution; the Chinese government's control over Manchuria had been limited prior to the Japanese

occupation and Japan had had a presence there since the 1905 war with Russia. Furthermore, the European powers were not very sympathetic to the Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek as he was actively trying to curb European influence in China, seeking to end foreign concessions in China.

US absence from the League was critical in ensuring that the League would not apply sanctions against Japan. The US government was divided over how to respond to Japan's invasion; Secretary of State, Henry Stimson, favoured a tough stance, possibly involving economic sanctions, but he was overruled by President Hoover who decided on a policy of US non-recognition of the new puppet state of Manchukuo.

Japan blocks the Council's resolution (October 1931)

An additional factor explaining the slowness of the League's response is that China initially appealed to the League under Article 11 of the League Covenant; under Article 11, a Council member that was involved in a dispute could veto a Council resolution. This is precisely what happened in late October 1931; Japan vetoed the Council resolution calling on her to withdraw her forces to the area around the South Manchuria Railway. Japan, probably with a view to buying time, proposed a commission be established to inquire into the Mukden Incident; the Council accordingly voted in December 1931 to set up the Lytton Commission, led by the English aristocrat, Lord Lytton, to investigate the Mukden Incident.

The establishment of Manchukuo

In March 1932, China appealed to the League Assembly using Article 15. The British hoped that through the League of Nations a formula regarding the status of Manchuria could be found that would be acceptable to both China and Japan. In February and March 1932, the League of Nations passed resolutions to the effect that members of the League should not recognise changes in the status of territory resulting from the use of force. In September 1932, the Japanese government formally recognised the new state of Manchukuo, claiming it was an independent country. Japan placed Pu Yi (the last Chinese emperor who had abdicated in 1912) on the throne as a puppet ruler.

The Lytton Report (October 1932)

It was not until October 1932 that the Lytton Commission produced its report in which it recommended that Manchuria should be an autonomous state but remain under Chinese sovereignty. The League took until February 1933 to vote to accept the report. Instead of trying to force Japan out of Manchuria, the League opted for a policy of 'non-recognition' – refusing to recognise Manchukuo as an independent state (which Japan claimed it now was). Japan promptly walked out of the League in March 1933.

Q. Why did the League fail to prevent the Japanese takeover of Manchuria?

1. The two greatest military powers in the region – the USA and the USSR – were not members of the League.

2. It fell to Britain and France to lead the League against Japan's aggression. However, both were aware of the vulnerability of their colonial holdings in the Far East and were not keen even on sanctions against the Japanese.

3. The League of Nations' procedures were slow and this contributed to the delay in deciding on a response to Japan's invasion. This was compounded by China's appeal under Article 11 (see above), which meant that Japan was able to veto the Council's resolution calling on the withdrawal of Japanese troops to the railway zone.

4. To an extent, British and French politicians were not unsympathetic to increased Japanese control of Manchuria because Japan had already considerable influence and concessions in the region and because China was still in a very unstable situation. Furthermore, for Britain, there was not enough in the way of British commercial and financial interests in China for the British government to risk a major confrontation over with Japan; China took only 2.5% of Britain's exports and accounted for just 5% of British foreign investment.

5. Britain and France were preoccupied with the effects of the Great Depression on their countries; the financial crisis peaked in 1931 with numerous banks collapsing.

The historian **Anthony Adamthwaite**, in ***The Making of the Second World War***, neatly summarises the reasons for the League's failure over Manchuria:

> Manchuria demonstrated that the League was toothless. Collective security depended on the readiness of the great powers to defend the status quo. Although Britain, France and the United States had much to lose in the Far East, Japanese expansion was not yet seen as a direct threat to western commercial and colonial interests. Indeed, France was inclined to see Japan as a bastion of order against anarchy and Bolshevism. In fact there was no chance of collective action against Japan. Western governments were engrossed in problems of economic recovery and disarmament negotiations.

Some historians have seen the Manchurian Incident as leading directly to Japan's attack on Jehol province in 1933 (the next Chinese province south of Manchuria), and eventually to the Japanese invasion of China in 1937 and the confrontation with the USA and European colonial power from 1940/41 onwards. However, historians such as CJ Bartlett, suggest a more complex picture in which competing factions within Japan's armed forces and its government struggled for ascendancy and argued over the direction of Japanese foreign policy; many senior Japanese politicians and commanders were keen to avoid war with China, either seeing it as too large to absorb, or preferring to keep China intact as a valuable trade partner, and were more preoccupied with the possible threat from the USSR. This latter view sees no inevitable path to world war.

Abyssinia 1935-36

The Abyssinian War of 1935-36 was a key turning point both in the fortunes of the League of Nations and in Mussolini's foreign policy; as a result of the invasion, his relations with Britain and France deteriorated and he drew closer to Hitler's Germany. The League's authority, already undermined by its failure in the Manchurian Incident, was further weakened.

Historians disagree about what led Mussolini to invade Abyssinia. Historians like Denis Mack Smith argue that Mussolini did so in an attempt to divert the Italian people's attention away from domestic economic problems. 'Intentionalist' historians, such as Martin Blinkhorn, see it in terms of *'an outgrowth of Fascism itself, its need to fight and win battles'.*

Q. What were Mussolini's aims in invading Abyssinia?

- To link up Italy's existing colonies in North-East Africa (Eritrea and Italian Somaliland).
- To gain revenge for the Italian defeat at Adowa (1896).
- To satisfy the many Italian nationalists who had been angry at Italy's failure to acquire colonies as a result of the 1919-20 Peace Settlement.
- To be able to claim to be recreating the glories of the ancient Roman Empire in North Africa.

Q. Why did Mussolini believe that Britain and France would permit his invasion of Abyssinia?

⇒ Pierre Laval, the French Foreign Minister, had, in January 1935, agreed that there were no major French interests at stake in Abyssinia.

⇒ In June 1935, Anthony Eden, the British Foreign secretary, had visited Rome and proposed a deal between Abyssinia and Italy which would have given Italy the Ogaden region and compensated Abyssinia with a piece of British Somaliland, allowing Abyssinia access to the sea.

⇒ In April 1935, Britain and France had signed an agreement with Mussolini, which became known as the Stresa Front; under its terms, the three countries agreed to take co-ordinated action against any country unilaterally violating existing treaties. This agreement was prompted by Hitler's announcement that he was reintroducing conscription (March 1935).

At this stage, Mussolini was very suspicious of Hitler's foreign ambitions and was anxious they might conflict with Italy's influence over Austria and his own ambitions to expand into the Balkans. The British and French governments were very keen to maintain a common front with Mussolini and to use it as a deterrent against further German breaches of the Versailles Treaty. The Stresa Front, therefore, conditioned to a considerable extent British and French policies towards the Abyssinian crisis as they did not want the crisis to jeopardize their agreement with Mussolini.

The Wal-Wal Incident (December 1934)

Mussolini was certainly considering an attack on Abyssinia from 1932 onwards, if not before. He picked a quarrel with Abyssinia after a small military clash at Wal-Wal in December 1934.

Following the Wal-Wal skirmish, Abyssinia referred the incident to the League. Although it is clear that Mussolini was now intent on an invasion of Abyssinia, he agreed to League arbitration over the Wal-Wal incident. In the meantime, he built up forces in preparation for an invasion. The League's arbitration committee did not produce its report until September 1935 and did not reach a clear conclusion.

In October 1935 Italian troops, tanks and planes invaded from Eritrea in the north. Before the invasion Emperor Haile Selassie had appealed 4 times to the League of Nations for help but the League of Nations took no action until war began.

The League takes action: The imposition of sanctions

Contrary to Mussolini's expectations, in October 1935, both the League Council and the Assembly condemned Italy's invasion and 50 of the 54 Assembly members voted in favour of economic sanctions. This was largely because the British government took a lead as it felt under pressure from public opinion – which evidently was very pro-League, as demonstrated by the Peace Ballot organised by the League of Nations Union in June 1935. The 50 Assembly members then set up a committee and subsequently a sub-committee of 18 to consider how to apply sanctions.

The League sub-committee on sanctions produced recommendations which eventually were implemented on 18 November: sales of arms, rubber and certain metals to Italy were banned; loans to Italy were banned; most Italian imports were also banned.

Q. Why did sanctions not prove effective?

⇒ Because they were not introduced until 18 November, six weeks after Mussolini began his invasion.

⇒ They did not include some of the very materials that Mussolini needed most, particularly oil, iron, steel and coal. This reflected the dilemma that the League's leading powers, Britain and France, found themselves in: they wanted to apply sufficient pressure on Mussolini to resolve the Abyssinian crisis but not so much that it led Mussolini to break off relations with them.

⇒ Countries who were not League members, such as the USA, Germany and Japan, continued to trade with Italy.

⇒ Sanctions took some time to have a significant impact on Italy, not until early 1936 was the Italian economy really affected adversely.

⇒ The League sub-committee of 18, in January 1936, commissioned a report on the option of a ban on oil sales to Italy. The report concluded in February that such a ban would have a significant effect within 3 or 4 months, but **only if** the USA participated in such an embargo (and this was a very remote possibility).

The imposition of sanctions angered Mussolini. By contrast Germany ignored the League sanctions and continued to trade with Italy.

Britain and France could have applied much greater pressure on Mussolini by closing the Suez Canal to Italian supply ships, forcing them to re-route thousands of kilometres around Africa. Britain and France, however, were not prepared to take tougher action against Mussolini because:

- They feared Hitler and desperately wanted to keep the two Fascists dictators apart.
- Britain and France were very keen to avoid war with Italy because they had not properly rearmed since the end of the First World War and were worried about the threat posed to their Far Eastern colonies by the Japanese.

The *Hoare-Laval Pact* of December 1935

Sir Samuel Hoare (Britain) and Pierre Laval (France) reached a secret agreement in Paris that about two-thirds of Abyssinia be offered to Italy, and Haile Selassie be compensated with land elsewhere instead. However, news of the proposed pact leaked out and there was a huge public outcry in both France and Britain. Both politicians lost their jobs as a result.

Mussolini completed the conquest of Abyssinia in May 1936; the League of Nations ended its sanctions on Italy in July 1936.

Q. What were the results of the Abyssinian War?

1. Italy took over all of Abyssinia. Haile Selassie went into exile.
2. The League was again shown to be weak.
3. Hitler re-occupied the Rhineland, exploiting the fact that international attention was focused on the Abyssinian crisis.
4. The Stresa Front (1935) between Italy, Britain and France collapsed.
5. Mussolini drew closer to Hitler, whose own aggression was encouraged by Mussolini's flouting of the League. In October 1936, Hitler and Mussolini signed the Rome-Berlin Axis, a friendship and trade agreement.
6. Mussolini withdrew Italy from League membership.

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KEY EVENTS: 1918-36

1917	March	• Abdication of Tsar Nicholas II of Russia
	November	• Bolshevik Revolution in Russia
1918	January	• Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points
	March	• The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (Germany & Russia)
	November	• Armistice on the Western Front; Germany's surrender
		• Abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany
		• Abdication of Emperor Karl of Austria-Hungary
1919	January	• Paris Peace Conference begins
	February	• Agreement reached to set up the League of Nations
	June	• Germany signs the Treaty of Versailles
	September	• D'Annunzio occupies Fiume
		• Treaty of St Germain signed with Austria
	November	• Treaty of Neuilly signed with Bulgaria
1920	March	• US Senate fails to ratify the Versailles Treaty
		• Allenstein and Marienwerder plebiscites vote to remain part of Germany
	June	• Treaty of Trianon signed with Hungary
	August	• Treaty of Sèvres signed with Turkish Empire
		• League resolves the Aaland Islands dispute
	October	• Poland seizes Vilna
1921	February	• Franco-Polish Treaty
	March	• Treaty of Riga ends Russo-Polish War
		• French occupy several towns in the Ruhr temporarily
		• League decides on partition of Upper Silesia between Poland and Germany
	April	• Allies fix reparations total at 132 billion gold marks
1922	February	• Washington Naval Treaty
	March	• Unsuccessful Genoa Conference on economic recovery
	April	• Treaty of Rapallo signed by Germany and the USSR
	September	• Chanak Incident
	October	• Mussolini appointed Prime Minister of Italy
1923	January	• French and Belgian troops occupy the Ruhr
		• Lithuania seizes Memel
	July	• Treaty of Lausanne signed with Turkey
	August	• Italy occupies Corfu
1924	January	• Franco-Czech Alliance
	February	• Great Britain recognises the USSR
	July-August	• London Conference agrees to the Dawes Plan
1925	October	• Locarno Conference
		• Greece invades Bulgaria but pulls out after League resolution
	December	• Locarno Treaties signed in London
1926	April	• Treaty of Berlin: Germany and the USSR

	September	• Germany joins the League of Nations
1927	**January**	• Allied Control Commission for Germany ended
	June-August	• Geneva Naval Conference
1928	**August**	• Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Pact) signed
1929	**August**	• Hague Conference approves Young Plan
	October	• Wall Street Crash
1930	**April**	• London Naval Treaty
	June	• Allied occupation forces complete their withdrawal from the Rhineland
1931	**June**	• Hoover proposes 1-year moratorium on debts
	September	• Mukden Incident: Kwantung Army takes control of Manchuria
1932	**February**	• Geneva Disarmament Conference opens
	June-July	• Lausanne Conference on reparations
1933	**January**	• Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany
	February	• League votes in favour of Lytton Report on Manchuria
	June-July	• World Economic Conference in London
	March	• Japan announces its withdrawal from the League
	October	• Germany leaves the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations
	November	• The USA recognises the USSR
1934	**May**	• Disarmament Conference closes
	September	• The USSR joins the League of Nations
	December	• Wal-Wal skirmish in Abyssinia
		• Japan repudiates the Washington Naval Treaty
1935	**January**	• Pierre Laval discusses Abyssinia with Mussolini
		• Saar plebiscite: led to reunion with Germany
	March	• Hitler announces reintroduction of conscription
	April	• Stresa Front signed by Britain, France and Italy
	May	• French-Soviet Union Mutual Assistance Treaty
		• Soviet-Czech Mutual Assistance Treaty
	June	• Anglo-German Naval Convention
	October	• Italian invasion of Abyssinia; League sanctions
	December	• Hoare-Laval Pact leaked to the press
		• London Naval Conference opens
1936	**January**	• Japan walks out of the London Naval Conference
	March	• Hitler remilitarizes the Rhineland
		• Italy completes the conquest of Abyssinia
	July	• League ends sanctions on Italy
		• Spanish Civil War begins
	November	• Rome-Berlin Axis signed
1937	**December**	• Italy leaves the League

Practice set of source questions for Prescribed Subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping – international relations 1918-36

These sources relate to the Treaty of Versailles (1919).

Source A Extract from ***Guilt at Versailles,*** by Antony Lentin, published London, 1984

It was a wise precept of Machiavelli that the victor should either conciliate his enemy or destroy him. The Treaty of Versailles did neither. It did not pacify Germany, still less permanently weaken her, appearances notwithstanding, but left her scourged, humiliated and resentful. It was neither a Wilson peace nor a Clemenceau peace, but a witches' brew concocted of the least palatable ingredients of each, which, though highly distasteful to Germany, were by no means fatal.

Source B Extract from ***A History of Germany 1815-1945,*** by William Carr, published London, 1985

Severe as the Treaty of Versailles seemed to many Germans, it should be remembered that Germany might easily have fared much worse. If Clemenceau had had his way, instead of being restrained by Britain and America, the Rhineland would have become an independent state, the Saarland would have been annexed to France and Danzig would have become an integral part of Poland...However, the Germans as a nation were not inclined to count their blessings in 1919...Most of all they resented the moral stigma of sole war-guilt which they did not feel...Finally, the fact that the treaty was not negotiated but dictated to Germany and signed in humiliating circumstances made it certain that the German people would accept no responsibility for its fulfilment. To the discerning it was clear from the beginning that the Versailles settlement would last only as long as the victorious powers were in a position to enforce it on a bitterly resentful people.

Source C Extract from ***The Economic Consequences of the Peace,*** by the economist and British delegate in Paris, John Maynard Keynes, published London, 1919

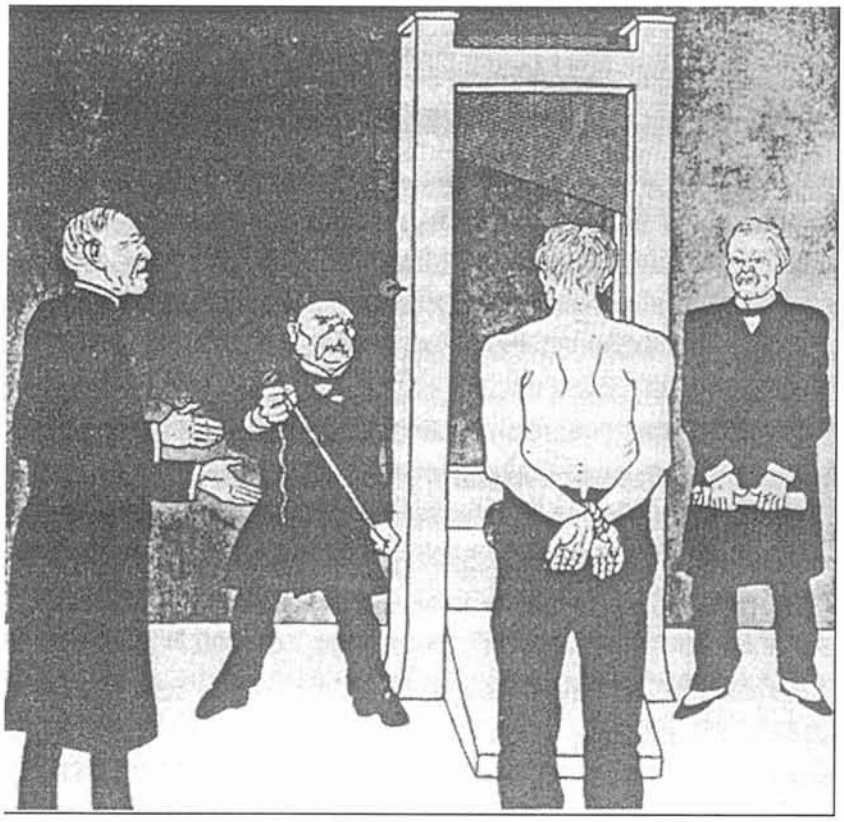
The future life of Europe was not their concern: its means of livelihood was not their anxiety. Their preoccupations, good and bad alike related to frontiers and nationalities, to the balance of power, to imperial aggrandizements, to the future enfeeblement of a strong and dangerous enemy, to revenge, and to the shifting by the victors of their unbearable financial burdens on to the shoulders of the defeated...

Most estimates of a great indemnity from Germany depend on the assumption that she is in the position to conduct in the future a vastly greater trade than she has ever had in the past.

Source D Extract from ***'Peacemaking 1919'***, *New York,* by Harold Nicolson, who had been a British delegate at the Paris Peace Conference, published New York, 1939.

The historian, with every justification, will come to the conclusion that we were very stupid men. I think we were... We came to Paris confident that the new world order was to be established; we left it convinced the new order had fouled the old... We arrived determined that a peace of justice and wisdom should be negotiated: we left it conscious that the treaties imposed were neither just nor wise... It is impossible to read German criticism without deriving the impression that the Paris Peace Conference was guilty of disguising an imperialist peace under the surface of Wilsonism... Hypocrisy was the predominant and inescapable result... We had to accept a system for others which, when it came to practice, we should refuse to apply ourselves.

Source E Cartoon from the German magazine, ***Simplicissimus,*** 3 June 1919.



Caption:
President Wilson to Germany: 'You have the right of self-determination: do you want to have your pockets turned out before or after your death?'

QUESTIONS

1. **(a)** Why, according to Source A, had the Allied statesmen been unwise in their treatment of Germany? [2 marks]

   (b) What message is conveyed by Source E? [3 marks]

2. Compare and contrast the views expressed about the Treaty of Versailles in Sources B and D. [6 marks]

3. With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source C and Source E for historians studying the Paris Peace Conference of 1919-20. [6 marks]

4. Using these sources and your own knowledge, analyse the reasons for German resentment of the Treaty of Versailles of 1919. [8 marks]

Questions with space for your own answers

1. **(a)** Why, according to Source A, had the Allied statesmen been unwise in their treatment of Germany? [2 marks]

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(b) What message is conveyed by Source E? [3 marks]

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Practice set of source questions for Prescribed Subject 1: Peacemaking, peacekeeping – international relations 1918-36

These sources relate to the Ruhr Crisis (1923).

Source A Extract from ***The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System 1919-1945,*** by Graham Ross, published Harlow (UK), 1985

It proved possible to extract some resources for removal to France and Belgium but this was only achieved at considerable cost to both the French and Belgian currencies...France had been feeling the cost of a struggle which left her diplomatically isolated and there was little point in seeking the economic collapse of Germany: the cost of passive resistance had completely undermined the mark and hyper-inflation was threatening to destroy the social stability of Germany. Stresemann ...called off passive resistance at the end of September. Poincaré did not immediately respond to this move; indeed...the French...encouraged coups by separatist movements, which soon proved to be failures. Neither France nor Germany had won this final round in the struggle. Military force alone could only extract reparations with difficulty and passive resistance involved enormous economic costs. This economic war of attrition was perhaps even more destructive for Germany than the military occupation.

Source B Extract from ***From Versailles to Pearl Harbor,*** by Margaret Lamb and Nicholas Tarling, published Basingstoke (UK), 2001

[Poincaré]...accepted an American offer of a panel of experts to work out a new international agreement on reparations which for its success would need the rehabilitation of Germany but almost simultaneously, he backed a separatist movement in the Rhineland. Whatever the purpose behind this apparently inconsistent policy, the result was dismal. The separatist movement failed. The French franc plummeted and France itself desperately needed new American loans. The price of securing them was French withdrawal from the Ruhr and an international settlement that was in accord with Anglo-American views. The experts' report on reparations, the Dawes Plan, recommended a smaller final fixed sum, a graduated scale of payments...and the stabilisation of the German economy by an injection of foreign loans. In return for the promise of these payments, the French agreed to evacuate the Ruhr within a year, cease their exploitation of the area, to limit the powers of the Reparations Commission and to accept restrictions on future sanctions.

Source C Extracts from letters between Lord Curzon, the British Foreign Secretary, and Raymond Poincaré, the French Prime Minister, during Ruhr Crisis, written in August 1923.

Lord Curzon:
His Majesty's Government have never concealed their view that the Franco-Belgian action...was not a sanction authorised by the treaty [of Versailles] itself.

Raymond Poincaré:
Since the signature of the peace, England has always tried to seek a basis of conciliation on which Germany could negotiate as an equal with the Allies...We are persuaded, on the other hand, that if Germany, so far from making the slightest effort to execute the treaty of peace, has only sought to evade her obligations, it is because she has not yet been convinced of her defeat...

In fact, the Allies have never got anything from Germany, except when, together, they have threatened to use force.

Source D A cartoon from the German satirical magazine, ***Simplicissimus,*** 1923.

Caption:
Gutenberg [the inventor of the printing press] and the Billions-Press, 'I never intended this!'

Source E Extract from ***The Global Conflict,*** by CJ Bartlett, published Harlow (UK), 1994

The committee of experts, chaired by the American delegate, General Dawes, provided for a reform of German finances – assisted by a foreign loan…The Ruhr was evacuated. In September 1924 the British, with French approval, proposed German admission to the League, while in the following month a new German loan was successfully floated, mostly with American money. The United States also joined the Reparations Commission. This reduced the likelihood of any further unilateral moves by the French. Nevertheless many fundamental economic problems remained. American loans were to a great extent merely postponing the day of reckoning. They were sustaining German reparations, European purchases from America, and helping to ease the payment of war debts. But they were not providing a long-term solution to European indebtedness to the United States…partly because American tariffs were proving such formidable obstacles to European exporters. It was only in the context of a Second World War and the onset of the Cold War that radical innovations, which reached their climax in Marshall Aid…began to make for a healthier economic relationship between Europe and America…

QUESTIONS

1. **(a)** Why, according to Source E, did the Dawes Plan not provide an answer to Europe's long-term economic problems? [3 marks]

   (b) What message is conveyed by Source D? [2 marks]

2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about how successful the French government's policy of occupying the Ruhr was. [6 marks]

3. With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source A and Source C for historians studying the Ruhr Crisis of 1923. [6 marks]

4. Using these sources and your own knowledge, analyse the results of the Ruhr Crisis of 1923. [8 marks]

Some suggestions for answering the questions

1. **(a)** Why, according to Source E, did the Dawes Plan not provide an answer to Europe's long-term economic problems? [3 marks]

You will be awarded 1 mark for each relevant point that you identify, up to a maximum of 3 marks.

Possible points to include:

- Because it does not tackle the problem of the debts owed by European countries to the USA.
- Because the USA's tariffs on European goods meant it was difficult for European countries to export to the USA.
- Because the underlying economic relationship between the USA and Europe was unhealthy and all that the Dawes Plan was doing was putting off the time when debts to the USA had to be paid back.

(b) What message is conveyed by Source D? [2 marks]

You will be awarded 1 mark for each valid point up to a maximum of 2 marks.

Possible points to make:

- That the printing of paper money is totally out of control, as shown by the money pouring in torrents off the 'Billions-Presses' and by Gutenberg (the inventor of the printing-press) shaking his head and saying that he never intended this.
- That the economic situation in Germany is desperate as shown by the hands urgently seeking to grasp the paper money as it pours off the press.

2. Compare and contrast the views expressed in Sources A and B about how successful the French government's policy of occupying the Ruhr was.

[6 marks]

You must ensure that you identify both points of similarity and points of difference. Do not go through each Source separately in turn. Instead, identify the ways in which the two Sources' evaluations are the same. Then identify the ways in which the two Sources' evaluations are different. Make sure that you provide ***detailed*** *comparison and contrasting of the Sources' evaluations.*

For comparison:
They agree that the French attempt to encourage separatist movements in the Rhineland failed. They agree that the French currency, the franc, was badly damaged by the Ruhr occupation. They agree that overall the Ruhr occupation was a failure for France: Source A says that neither France or Germany 'won'; whereas Source B refers to France's 'dismal' failure.

For contrast:
A's evaluation is more positive than B's. A suggests that the occupation had some success in extracting materials from the Ruhr (though at a considerable cost) and points out that the German government did eventually call off passive resistance to the French occupation force. Whereas, Source B does not suggest in any way that the occupation was a success and is much more critical in its assessment of French policy, dubbing it 'inconsistent' and arguing that it ended in 'dismal' failure, with France having to make a series of concessions in order to acquire American loans.

3. With reference to their origin and purpose, discuss the value and limitations of Source A and Source C for historians studying the Ruhr Crisis of 1923.

[6 marks]

Remember that you are ***not*** *being asked to compare the value of the two sources, so do not do so. Instead, treat each of them separately. The IBO mark-scheme says that ideally there will be a balance in your answer between the two sources and each one can be marked out of 3 marks, but examiners are allowed a 4/2 mark split.*

In order to gain the maximum 6 marks, you must refer to all elements: origin, purpose, value and limitations and you must link origin and purpose to value and limitations. Do not just state the origin or purpose of the source without explaining how that affects the source's value and limitations.

Keep focused on evaluating the value and limitations of the two sources in the context of their origin and purpose, ***DO NOT*** *drift into evaluating the sources'* ***content****.*

Some possible points to make (But remember in your answer to ***LINK*** *origin/purpose with value/limitations):*

Source A

Origin: An extract from a book by a British historian on international relations in Europe between the end of the First World War and the end of the Second World War, published in the United Kingdom in 1985.

Purpose: To analyse international relations in the period 1919-45 and inform presumably an academic audience, as it does not appear to be a 'popular' history.

Value: Written by a British academic, so likely to be well researched. Written 60 years after the events by a British historian, it is unlikely to be biased.
As a work on international relations 1919-45, it places the Ruhr Crisis (in this case the results of the crisis) in a wider international context and longer perspective.

Limitations: As an extract from a book on international relations over a period of 26 years, it is not a specialist work on the Ruhr Crisis and therefore will not provide a comprehensive survey of the crisis, but an overview which is not very detailed.

Source C

Origin: Correspondence between two leading politicians, one French, one British involved in the Ruhr Crisis.

Purpose: In the case of Poincaré, he appears to be seeking to defend his policy (the occupation of the Ruhr) and to attack the lenient policy of the British towards Germany.
In the case of Curzon, he is seeking to attack France's occupation as illegal, and therefore possibly secure France's withdrawal.

Value: It is valuable as a contemporary source for French and British politicians' views on the Ruhr crisis, about half-way through the crisis in 1923. It indicates clearly the divergence in the two countries' policies. The fact that one of the statesmen is the French Prime Minister, Poincaré, who ordered the Ruhr occupation, is valuable as it provides an insight into how he tried to defend that policy.

Limitations: It is not clear whether these letters were published at the time and therefore how candid the two politicians would have been in expressing their views; even if the correspondence was not aimed at the public, the two politicians are trying to persuade each other of their differing viewpoints and this might mean that they provide a very one-sided argument, not divulging anything that might undermine their respective positions.

The correspondence dates from August – the middle of the Ruhr Crisis – so it does not cast any light on how the crisis developed through to November 1923 and its eventual outcome and results.

4. Using these sources and your own knowledge, analyse the results of the Ruhr Crisis of 1923. [8 marks]

If you only include source material or only own knowledge in your answer, the maximum mark you can achieve is 5. The IBO mark-scheme says that in order to achieve full marks, you need argument, synthesis of source material and own knowledge (the two used together, rather than separately), and precise references to the sources used.

The fourth question is worth nearly one third of the marks and should therefore be treated as a short essay. It is much better to use your own knowledge and the sources together rather than adopting a source by source approach. In this case start by planning your answer by jotting down a number of results of the Ruhr Crisis and then organise them into a clear structure, for example, grouping them into short-term and long-term. Then use both the sources and your own knowledge to provide examples for these results. Finally, you might indicate the relative importance of the various results; some will be more important than others.

Source material that could be used:

Source A:
- France managed to extract some materials from the Ruhr but at a huge cost.
- The French and Belgian currencies were damaged by the crisis.
- France was left 'diplomatically isolated'.
- Germany's economy was at the point of collapse and German society was put under huge strain.

Source B:
- France's intervention was a total failure.
- The value of the French franc plummeted.
- France had to withdraw from the Ruhr in order to secure US loans.
- The Dawes Plan was drawn up to tackle the issues surrounding reparations and the chaotic state of Germany's economy.

Source C:
- The Ruhr Crisis clearly revealed the divergent policies of Britain and France towards enforcement of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
- The crisis heightened tensions between France and Britain over how to deal with Germany.

Source D:
- The German government printed paper-money recklessly so that the currency situation got out of control.

Source E:
- The Ruhr was evacuated.
- US loans, under the Dawes Plan, were provided for Germany and this helped restore its economy.
- The USA was drawn into involvement in sorting out the reparations crisis but the Dawes Plan did not create a healthy situation in the long-term because it made Germany more dependent on US loans.

Own knowledge that could be used:
- Development and illustration of any of the above, e.g. explanation of how the hyper-inflation crisis caused chaos in Germany and widespread social misery, before Gustav Stresemann restored currency stability with a new controlled currency.
- The failure of France to force Germany to comply with the terms of the Versailles Treaty made France feel even more insecure. This in part explains the increasingly defensive policy taken by France; having failed to keep Germany weak by military intervention, France did not try to use force again, instead building the Maginot Line to protect France against German attack.
- The serious nature of the crisis for international relations and Europe's economy stability, led to a new approach by British, French and German politicians – namely, a search for improved relations between the former wartime enemies. This led to the Locarno Treaties of 1925.
- The Ruhr Crisis led Hitler to launch an unsuccessful bid for power, the Munich Putsch of November 1923.
- The Ruhr Crisis undermined the Weimar Republic in the long-term because many of the German middle-classes lost their savings during the hyper-inflation crisis and therefore lost confidence in the democratic political system.
- The Dawes Plan, which emanated from the Ruhr Crisis, led to a period of sustained economic growth in Germany between 1924 and 1929.
- The Dawes Plan made Germany dangerously reliant on the continuation of American loans, so that Germany was particularly hard hit when Wall Street crashed in 1929.